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ABSTRACT

This report focuses on the organization of guidance provision through a Personal Guidance Base for low achievers aged 16 to 18. An introduction outlines the background to the concept of a local Personal Guidance Base to which young people can turn as they move from school to adult and working life, and identifies its main elements. Opportunities for low achievers aged 16 to 18 are reviewed, and the role of guidance as mediation between the individual and the variety of opportunities open to the individual is examined. A discussion of guidance provides a definition, explores the kinds of activities it may involve, and indicates some of the agencies and individuals who may offer it to young people. Four possible strategies are then explored for implementing within a locality the main features of a Personal Guidance Base. The role that further education colleges might play in relation to each of these four strategies is discussed, and application of similar Personal Guidance Base strategies within further education colleges themselves is examined. The report concludes by reflecting on the processes of change implied by the attempt to implement a Personal Guidance Base. (YLB)

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FURTHER EDUCATION UNIT

A PROJECT REPORT

Towards a Personal Guidance Base

**John Miller, Bryce Taylor and
A. G. Watts**

**National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling
(Jointly sponsored by The Hatfield Polytechnic and the Careers
Research and Advisory Centre)**

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Dear Sir/Madam

TOWARDS A PERSONAL GUIDANCE BASE

Attached is a document which examines in some depth the challenge to FE colleges if they wish to provide or participate in the provision of a Local Personal Guidance Base (PGB) to which young people can turn as they move from school to adult and working life. It is the result of a two-year investigational and development project, commissioned from NICEC by the FEU. Whilst it concentrates mainly on the organisation of guidance provision, chapter three in particular contains an extended discussion on guidance, the kinds of activities it involves and some of the agencies who may provide it.

Much of the document explores what is, or should be, meant by a Personal Guidance Base and relates them to current experiments and models, within and without the UK. The thrust of the document is on supporting 16-18 year old low achievers, and whilst this priority persists throughout, the principles discussed go far beyond this group.

The strategy of the project, whereby the researcher was expected to combine research and supportive development within his own college, was attractive and, it is claimed, fruitful. Its overall success will eventually be measured, in part at least, by the reality of the concept and the problems it poses, as perceived by colleges.

The authors summarise the report by defining the characteristics of a PGB, analysing the models, identifying possible strategies and describing the implications for further education. They conclude "Whatever its role in a Local PGB, a FE college has to determine how much attention guidance is to be given within its own structure, and how this guidance is to be provided. If it does not do this, any claims it may make at a Local PGB level are not likely to be taken seriously".

This report needs to be read against the background of the Youth Training Scheme. Guidance has been identified by the MSC as one of the key components of the scheme, and Managing Agents are to be responsible for the overall provision. The complexity of the function is however, recognised by the MSC and some form of local co-ordination appears necessary. This document should generally assist in providing a conceptual framework for that co-ordination but more particularly it should encourage colleges to define and negotiate their role in this area of provision.

The FEU will consider supporting colleges who wish to follow through the ideas in this document.

Yours faithfully

Jack Mansell

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- (a) to review and evaluate the range of existing further education curricula and programmes and to identify overlap, duplication, deficiencies and inconsistencies therein;
- (b) to determine priorities for action to improve the provision of further education and to make recommendations as to how such improvement can be effected;
- (c) to carry out studies in further education and to support investigations of and experimentation in, and the development of further education curricula and to contribute to and assist in the evaluation of initiatives in further education;
- (d) to disseminate and publish information and to assist in the dissemination and publication of information about recommendations for and experiments and developments in further education.

The publications in this series of Reports are intended to inform teachers and others and to stimulate professional discussion about matters of concern to the FE service. The views expressed are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Unit's Board of Management. A limited number of extra copies of this report are available from Publications Despatch Centre, Department of Education and Science, Honeypot Lane, Canons Park, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 1AZ.
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This report is the outcome of a two-year project, commissioned from the National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling (NICEC) by the Further Education Unit (FEU), which was designed to explore the possibilities of developing a 'Personal Guidance Base' for low achievers aged 16-18. The project has attempted to disentangle the issues involved in the concept of a Personal Guidance Base, and to illuminate them with examples drawn from practice; it has also worked in a consultancy role in a few areas, attempting to help people in those areas to implement the concept. While the project has maintained its primary focus on low achievers, it has also recognised that many of the issues with which it has been concerned are of broader relevance.

The present report focusses mainly on the *organisation* of guidance provision; it is complemented by an FEU/NICEC manual on *Tutoring* (Miller, 1982), which focusses more on the *techniques* of guidance. A further distinction between the two documents is that whereas *Tutoring* is aimed primarily at practitioners within FE colleges, the present document is aimed primarily at decision-makers both within Local Authorities and within FE colleges who are responsible for organising guidance provision for young people. These distinctions are matters of balance, however: the two documents can fruitfully be read alongside one another.

The main body of the report that follows is based on visits we have made during 1980-82 to 20 colleges of further education and to a wide variety of other schemes and agencies including schools, YOP schemes, Youth Service agencies, etc. Some we visited once; some we visited several times. As an exploratory project, we did not follow a clear predetermined methodology: instead, we tried to follow up any developments we heard of which seemed relevant to the concepts embedded in the idea of a Personal Guidance Base. This enabled us gradually to distil these concepts and to develop the framework for exploring them which forms the basis of, in particular, Chapter Four and Chapter Five.

The project was not, however, conceived only as a research project: part of its brief, particularly in its second year, was to seek to use the learning from the research phase to influence developments in particular colleges or areas. In the event, not as much time was available for the project's development phase as had

been hoped. Nonetheless, the project contributed in a variety of ways to ongoing discussions with colleges, as well as to a large number of networking events and training activities. Although the product of these efforts is difficult to quantify, they have meant that the project's conceptual and research work has not only been illuminated by practice, but has reciprocally illuminated such practice during the course of the project's life.

The report that follows is divided into six chapters. In Chapter One, we outline the background to the concept of a Personal Guidance Base, and identify the main elements of the concept. In Chapter Two, we define the term 'low achievers', review in greater detail the range of opportunities open to them at 16-18, explore the concept of progression, and examine the relationship of guidance to this concept. In Chapter Three, we define guidance, explore the kinds of activities it may involve, and indicate some of the agencies and individuals who may offer it to young people. In Chapter Four, we explore four possible strategies for implementing within a locality the main features of a Personal Guidance Base. In Chapter Five, we explore the role which FE colleges might play in relation to each of these four strategies, and examine how similar Personal Guidance Base strategies might be applied within FE colleges themselves. Finally, in Chapter Six, we reflect on the processes of change implied by the attempt to implement a Personal Guidance Base, drawing particularly upon the consultancy phase of the project.

We would like to express our thanks to the various people in colleges and elsewhere who helped us with our enquiries, to the FEU for sponsoring the project, to the members of our Steering Committee*, to colleagues at NICEC who have taken part in fruitful discussions related to the project, and to Margaret Taylor for her work as project secretary.

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NICEC

* See Appendix

1 Introduction

Changing Structures at 16-18

1.1 The social provision for 'low achievers' during the period immediately following the minimum school-leaving age has been an issue of constant debate and concern in recent years. In times of full employment, the issue tended to be left to the natural forces of the labour market. The result was that many of these young people moved around between a variety of unskilled jobs offering no formal education or training and little or no security or prospects (see eg. National Youth Employment Council, 1970). The advent of high levels of youth unemployment, however, has meant that even these limited 'opportunities' are no longer available to many of them. By the end of 1981, one in every two of under-18-year-olds seeking work was unemployed or on the Youth Opportunities Programme (Youthaid, 1981b), and although they covered a very wide range of ability, they included a disproportionate concentration of low achievers (MSC, 1981b).

1.2 Youth unemployment has both exacerbated the plight of these young people, and increased the pressure to find a new framework through which their transition into adult society might be accomplished. The shortage of paid employment has meant that this framework has increasingly had to comprise other elements: 'work experience', community service, and education and training provision. Some view these as being simply a series of meaningless diversions designed to occupy young people deprived of access to the work roles which are still in our society the main sources of social identity and of income. Others see them as offering low achievers opportunities to develop a wider range of skills and knowledge, and a sounder base for their futures than they have been offered in the past. Which of these views will prove to be closer to reality is still open to debate.

1.3 When the first major programmes for the young unemployed were set up in the mid-1970s, they were justified largely on the grounds that they provided stepping-stones to jobs. The placement rates following the Job Creation Programme and the Work Experience Programme, for example, were high enough to sustain this justification, and when in 1978 they were merged into the Youth Opportunities Programme, this continued for a while. In 1978, the placement rate

from the work-experience elements of the programme was 68%. With increasing levels of unemployment, however, this figure fell, until by April/June 1980 it had reached 30% (*Hansard*, 16 December 1981).

1.4 One result of this change has been to emphasise the need for such programmes to be justified not just in terms of placement rates but in broader terms of their learning value. There remains, however, a deep dilemma here. Many young people — particularly low achievers — are disenchanted with formal education and training structures, and are very instrumental in their attitudes to learning. They are willing to submit themselves to learn from formal structures only if they can see some 'point' to it, and they tend to define such relevance in vocational terms. Yet, rising unemployment has made it more difficult to offer any clear expectations on which to base job-specific education and training. Moreover, many jobs do not in themselves have much learning potential.

1.5 The resolution which has been sought to this dilemma has been to devise a middle way between subject-based general education and job-specific training, and to focus the new learning structures around the broad needs of young people in making the transition to adult and working life. This is, for example, the philosophy which underlies the FEU's concept of 'vocational preparation' (FEU, 1981). The phrase 'adult and working life' indicates that the concept of work remains central, but in a broad sense; the aim is to help the young people to develop a variety of skills, competencies and experience that will provide a broad and flexible preparation for work of varied kinds. In addition, it is hoped that this kind of broad preparation for work can be used as a vehicle for wider forms of learning which the young people concerned may be able to apply in other areas of their lives — including, if necessary, surviving periods of unemployment (though this is often not made too explicit).

1.6 This approach has been applied by the FEU to the three main broad arenas in which learning programmes designed particularly (though not exclusively) for low achievers aged 16-18 have now been developed. The first is the full-time pre-employment courses provided within FE colleges (and

sometimes within schools): they currently include City and Guilds Foundation Courses, RSA Vocational Preparation Courses, and others (see FEU, 1979b). As from 1984/85, most of these courses are likely to be brought together within the framework of the new '17+' qualification — provisionally termed the 'Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education' — which is designed both for colleges and for schools. The second and much the largest arena is the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP), which is designed for unemployed young people: it includes short training courses, but chiefly consists of three forms of work experience — Work Experience on Employers' Premises (WEEP), Community Projects, and Training Workshops (see FEU, 1979a). The Government has announced that this programme is to be extended in length, improved in quality, and transmuted into a new 'Youth Training Scheme' by the autumn of 1983 (MSC, 1981a; DE, 1981; MSC, 1982). The third arena is the Unified Vocational Preparation scheme, which is still limited in scale, but is designed for those young people who have managed to secure jobs that would not previously have offered (or required) any formal training (see FEU, 1978). From 1983, UVP is to be extended and merged into the new Youth Training Scheme to form a comprehensive scheme for all young people outside full-time education (MSC, 1982).

1.7 Although the responsible bodies and the status of the young people have been different in each of these three cases, many of the basic principles underlying them have been similar, and have been brought together by the FEU within its broad 'vocational preparation' framework. The base-point for this framework is not the formal structures of academic disciplines, nor the requirements of particular occupations, but the 'needs' of young people in relation to their transition to adult and working life. The concept of 'needs' in education is notoriously ambiguous and problematic; it begs the question of the relationship of 'needs' to 'wants', and leaves open the issue of who is to define these needs and in relation to what set of moral and social criteria. It would seem reasonable, however, that the young people themselves should be more closely consulted about the content of programmes based on their supposed needs than is the case with subject-based or job-training-based programmes. With the latter

programmes, the role of the student is often confined to choosing whether to enter the programme or not; the nature of the programme itself, and the assessment of whether the student has met its demands, are determined by others. With programmes focused around young people's needs, however, the young people arguably need to be involved both in negotiating what the programme is to contain, and in assessing whether it has succeeded, if their co-operation and motivation are to be harnessed.

1.8 These ideas are attractive and humanistic ones. It would, however, be easier to have confidence if they were being applied — as suggested by the FEU (1981, p.7) — to the whole ability range, rather than being confined in the main to low achievers. Already the danger that such ideas may be mere camouflage for the development of a 'tertiary modern' system, comparable to the old 'secondary modern' school, has been voiced (see e.g. Younthaïd, 1981a). There is certainly a danger that the optimism and concern embedded in the ideas may be outweighed by the process of labelling those to whom they are applied, and by the failure to establish effective bridges to the structures through which advancement to better-paid and higher-status jobs is achieved. Moreover, the ideas of a student-centred approach to learning are demanding ones even for students who are articulate and adept in the kind of self-reflective thinking and autonomous action which they require; they are much more difficult to implement for low achievers. As Hayes *et al.* (1982) point out, 'Most young people have little experience of either receiving sophisticated feedback from those who instruct them or reflecting on their own learning and learning needs' (p.106). The ambitiousness of what is being attempted should not be under-estimated.

The Place of Guidance

1.9 If the attempt is to be successful, and if young people's problems, motivations and development are to move from the periphery to the centre of the stage, the quality of guidance services seems likely to be of crucial importance. Certainly guidance is no panacea, but it can help to maximise the potential that exists within the learning opportunities available, in terms of

matching them with, and making them responsive to, young people's needs. Increasing attention is accordingly now being paid to the role of guidance for young people aged 16-18. In relation to the Youth Opportunities Programme, for example, Knasel *et al.* (1982) have drawn from various documents published by the Manpower Services Commission to suggest three broad rationales for guidance and support for this age-group:

- (a) The need for *vocational* guidance and support in view of the central importance of orientation towards, preparation for, and effective entry into, paid employment.
- (b) The need for *educational* guidance and support in view of the central importance of education and training objectives.
- (c) The need for *personal* guidance and support in view of the fact that the structures being set up at 16-18 have taken responsibility for large numbers of young people, some of whom may be prone to social and emotional problems, at an important transition point in their development — a point when they are particularly responsive to the influence of 'significant others', when the influences of school and (to some extent) parents have been removed, and yet when they have not yet established their own families or stable job connections.

1.10 Each of these areas of guidance and support is likely to be provided by a variety of people, including family and friends, people with day-to-day contact with the young people within particular schemes, and people with specialist guidance responsibilities. At a professional level, the Careers Service have a particular expertise and a statutory responsibility in the *vocational* area, while the Youth and Community Service and the Social Services have special concern for the *personal* area. The issue of who has particular expertise and responsibility in the *educational* area is less clear — particularly if the term 'educational guidance', instead of being confined to learning opportunities within the formal educational system, is extended to cover on-the-job and other forms of learning — but FE colleges would seem to have an important part to play.

1.11 The concept of educational guidance has indeed been accorded central significance in many of the

documents developed by the FEU. Thus, the FEU report on *Vocational preparation* (FEU, 1981) suggests that among the four key components of vocational preparation programmes are *negotiation* between the various participants in the programme, including the young people themselves, and *counselling, guidance and assessment* to help the young people to assess their potential and to relate it to assessment of job prospects (the other two key components are 'acquisition of basic skills and knowledge' and 'relevance and experience'). The idea of 'negotiation' incorporates the notion that learning programmes should be based around a 'learning agenda' which is developed with the young person and describes the nature and sequence of learning experiences and the skills etc. they are designed to develop. This then becomes the basis for a negotiated contract between the young person and the agencies providing the learning experiences, and for a profile which records what has been learned and facilitates progression from one experience to another. Guidance and counselling can thus be seen as part of the process whereby the learner is encouraged to take responsibility for his or her own learning. As such, it forms an essential part of the curriculum core. The concept of 'trainee-centred reviewing' (Pearce *et al.*, 1981) provides one approach to implementing these ideas, encouraging young people to reflect regularly and systematically on their needs, their experience, and their potential.

The Concept of a 'Personal Guidance Base'

1.12 The issue of where and how such guidance is to be provided remains an open one. The variety of the guidance agencies and other sources of help which at present might be available to young people could in principle enrich the scale and variety of resources on which they can draw. Alternatively, it could be a source of confusion, of duplication, and of imperialist wars between professional groups seeking to protect and enlarge their professional territories; from all of these the young person is likely, at least in the short term, to be the main sufferer. There has accordingly been concern to harmonise the structures of guidance provision, and to ensure that young people who need help do not 'fall through the net'.

1.13 One suggested approach — the one which provides the starting-point for the present report — is the concept of a 'Personal Guidance Base' suggested by Levy (1980). In the course of a survey in the West Midlands of curriculum planning and implementation for the FE elements of the Youth Opportunities Programme, Levy suggested that 'provision of a "Personal Guidance Base" through which young people could continue to seek counselling on careers, education/training or personal needs would offer further support and enable self-development to continue during periods of enforced unemployment' (p.83). Personal learning agendas 'could be updated regularly by negotiation with the young person, perhaps during visits to the Personal Guidance Base, to take account of recent experience, achievements and newly identified learning needs' (p.83). Levy also suggested that, 'in co-operation with other agencies, especially the Youth Service and the Careers Service, FE would play an active part in the education/training role of the proposed Personal Guidance Base which would be concerned with progression into further opportunities (rather than "stagnation on the dole")' (p.84).

1.14 From these and other passages in Levy's report, a number of possible features of the Personal Guidance Base as envisaged by her can usefully be distinguished. Each of them raises important issues.

1.15 First, there is the notion of a basic guidance *location*, which young people can 'visit' as and when they need help. Where this location should be is left open. Should there be one location in any given area, or several? Should the PGB be based in an existing location, or a new one? If a new one, who is to finance it? If an existing location, which? — an FE college, a Careers Office, or somewhere else?

1.16 Second, there is the notion of *continuity*: that young people will continue to come back to the base for help at various times, particularly *between* placements on different schemes and opportunities. Levy was particularly concerned that young people who move outside the range of conventional options should have a continuing access point which would enable them to re-enter such options when they were ready to do so. This again, however, raises issues.

Should each youngster be attached to one particular guidance 'base'? If so, who decides which base this should be, the youngster or some 'authority'? What if the youngster does not find a base congenial; what incentives or sanctions are to be used to bring him/her back there?

1.17 Third, there is the central focus on *learning* and on *progression*. While Levy's reference to 'counselling on careers, education/training or personal needs' indicates that all three of the guidance areas identified earlier — vocational, educational, and personal — are included in the concept of a PGB, it is clear that Levy conceives of its central concern as being helping to ensure that learning needs are identified and are related to learning opportunities in a way which ensures that placements promote rather than stultify the individual's continued development. This raises the issue of how far such a focus on learning can be validated to young people who may, at times, be much more concerned with getting a job or with personal problems to which no learning programme is likely to be a solution. It also raises the issues of whether the technical base for such an approach to learning can be developed in the form of assessment devices, counselling skills etc., and whether it is going to be possible to develop sufficient opportunities justifiable in such terms to make it credible. Is it not the case that many placements are going to have to be justified in other terms? — eg. as paying an allowance, or because there is no better alternative. And is the concept of 'progression' — particularly progression to more advanced forms of education and training — realistic without structural changes on the part of validating and examining bodies, etc. (see FEU, 1982).

1.18 Fourth, there is the notion of *inter-agency collaboration*. Levy recognises that continuity and progression require 'greater collaboration and co-operation between many agencies who might be involved': these 'may include MSC, the Careers Service, FE, the Youth Service, voluntary agencies, employers, work-place supervisors and so on' (p.84). Some of them, it seems, may be partners in the PGB itself; indeed, as we have already seen, Levy seems to envisage a particular role here for FE colleges, for the Youth and Community Service, and for the Careers Service. Is it then the case that representatives of all

these services will be located at the base? If so, will they maintain their existing administrative and professional allegiances, and simply be under the same roof together; or will new forms of collaboration, skill-sharing and mutual accountability be developed? Again, what is the relationship to be between the guidance offered by the PGB-based agencies and that offered by other agencies and individuals, notably within schemes and opportunities themselves — whether based on employers' premises, in FE colleges, or elsewhere? Is the youngster only, in principle, to come to the base *before* and *after* schemes and opportunities, or are the PGB staff to be involved in some way while he/she is *within* a particular scheme or opportunity?

1.19 Finally, there is the notion of *Further Education's special role* in relation to the concept of a PGB. This is not stated explicitly, but it follows from the central concern with learning and progression, because it is clear that Levy considers FE to have particular expertise to offer in this area. Earlier in her report, for example, she points out that 'the Careers Service emphasis on getting a young person into employment means that the starting point is the trainee's *current* experience and achievements, and the local job opportunities', and argues that 'guiding a trainee into a particular YOP scheme to an extent pre-empts educational need diagnosis by the professional educator' (p.50). Accordingly, 'FE has an education consultancy role which should be exercised through all YOP schemes if they are fully to provide for the learning needs of trainees in the transition to adult and working life' (p.84). This involves both the *guidance* task of helping each youngster in drawing up, maintaining and reviewing a learning agenda, and the *administrative* task of co-ordinating learning activities associated with it. While Levy's report is restricted to YOP, and is, therefore, mainly concerned with progression between schemes within YOP, it would be surprising if she did not envisage this role as extending to other learning opportunities.

1.20 In essence, therefore, Levy seems to be claiming for Further Education the primary professional responsibility in the *educational* guidance area. The claim is comparable to that which, as we have seen, the Careers Service holds in relation to *vocational*

guidance, if lacking the statutory status of the Careers Service's responsibility; it is also comparable to the claim which (to a lesser extent) the Youth and Community Service and Social Services might make in relation to *personal* guidance. Furthermore, since *educational* guidance is central to the concept of a PGB, the implicit suggestion is that FE's role in relation to other agencies in the PGB should be that of 'first among equals'. Whether this would be immediately accepted by other agencies is open to question. On top of the issues raised earlier about the primacy to be attached to the educational-guidance function within a PGB, some might hold that even if it was accorded such primacy, it should not be assumed that FE would necessarily have an automatic claim to special expertise in this area. After all, the concepts of negotiated learning agendas etc. are still very new within FE itself, which has been accustomed to much more structured and traditional approaches to curriculum development. The report by Pearce *et al.* (1981) on 'trainee-centred reviewing', while recognising that 'the professional training of most (FE) staff lends itself to a clearer understanding of the concepts involved', adds that 'despite this better understanding, there is still a great need to help FE staff identify and develop the necessary skills' (p.17), and certainly does not assume that FE necessarily has any consultancy or co-ordinating role in relation to the application of TCR in other settings. While there seems to be a good case for FE having a special role in relation to educational guidance, it may be that in the vocational preparation area it still has to earn this role rather than being in a position simply to claim it.

1.21 To raise all these issues is to recognise the complexity of the matters which Levy's report raised. The remaining chapters of this report will aim to explore the idea of a Personal Guidance Base in more detail, to investigate and clarify the concepts involved, and to relate them to current experiments in practice in different areas — particularly those in and around FE colleges. It is accepted from the outset that an FE college might not be the only or always the best location for a PGB, though there is a particular interest in whether FE should contribute to it, and if so, in what ways. First, though, we need to define the term 'low achievers', to review in greater detail the range of opportunities open to them at 16-18, to explore the

concept of progression, to examine the relationship of guidance to this concept, and to explore in more detail what we mean by 'guidance' and who provides it. It is to these matters that we turn in Chapters Two and Three.

2 Opportunities at 16-18 and the Role of Guidance

Opportunities at 16-18 and the Role of Guidance

Opportunities for 'Low Achievers' at 16-18

2.1 We have indicated that low achievers are the main though not the exclusive focus of this report. The term 'low achiever' is a vague one, and it is perhaps not necessary to define it too precisely. It has frequently been used to refer to those young people who leave school with few, if any, formal educational qualifications (a few low-grade CSE passes at most) and who in the normal course of events would not be able to enter higher-level educational courses or jobs offering formal education and training. In 1979/80, 48% of school-leavers had no passes at A-level, O-level or CSE grade 1 (DES, 1981); if allowance is made for a few of these to secure subsequent education and training of a traditional kind, 'the bottom 40%' seems a reasonable if crude definition of 'low achievers' in these terms. It is important to add that some of these low achievers will have strong aptitudes and abilities in areas which schools have not attempted to develop or which examinations have not been able to measure.

2.2 Low achievers tend to present formal institutions

with more difficult problems than do other young people. They are more likely to have personal and learning difficulties, to lack stable family support, and to suffer from social problems which can adversely affect their motivation and behaviour. It needs to be emphasised, however, that these are only *tendencies*: low achievers are over-represented among young people experiencing these various forms of disadvantage, but are by no means coterminous with them.

2.3 The full distribution of young people aged 16-18 between different patterns of education and training provision is shown in Table 2.1. It shows that in 1979/80, some 46% of young people aged 16 were either in employment without part-time further education, or in YOP, or unemployed. It can be safely assumed that most of those conventionally defined as low achievers would have been in these three groups, but not all: some would still have been at school, and a few in non-advanced further education — eg. in the full-time courses some LEAs have set up to cater for such young people. And some in the three groups would not have been low achievers; for example,

Table 2.1: Education and training of young people aged 16-18 in academic year 1979/80

	Age 16	Age 17	Age 18	Total
Full-time education in school	26	18	2	16
Full-time non-advanced further education	14	9	4	9
Part-time day non-advanced further further education	12	16	13	14
Advanced education	0	0	9	3
Employed without part-time day further education, or on YOP	40	51	64	52
Registered unemployed	6	6	7	7
Total	100	100	100	100
Number (000s)	814	800	779	2,393

Source: Hansard, 30 April 1981.

although the majority of YOP entrants in 1979/80 had no qualifications at all (55%) or passes below CSE grade 1 (20%), some 25% had CSE grade 1, O-level or even A-level passes (MSC, 1980).

2.4 Much of what we say in this report is likely, however, to be applicable not just to low achievers but to all those who are in YOP, in full-time employment without formal training, or in educational courses which are not aimed at post-O-level qualifications or at specific occupational opportunities. This group may well be becoming larger. In particular, the proportion of statutory-age school-leavers entering YOP in 1979/80 — the year covered in Table 2.1 — was one in six; but by 1980/81 it was one in three (MSC, 1981b); and in 1981/82 it seems likely to have been one in two. Much of the increase has no doubt comprised young people who in earlier years would have entered employment without formal training, but it has probably also drawn from other groups; the proportion of YOP entrants with at least CSE grade 1 passes rose from 25% in 1979/80 to 30% in 1980/81, and those with lower-grade CSE passes from 20% to 35% (MSC, 1981b).

2.5 A further point that should be borne in mind is that there is currently a fair amount of movement between different groups between the ages of 16 and 18. Thus, for example, a school-leaver might enter a job with day-release, then become unemployed, and subsequently enter a YOP scheme, before eventually getting a job again — this time, perhaps, one without day-release. For this and the other reasons outlined above, the fact that our main focus is on low achievers should not obscure the wider relevance of our area of enquiry.

2.6 If we exclude from consideration those entering post-O-level courses, apprenticeships, etc., the main options available at the time of writing to young people aged 16-18 would appear to be as follows:

1. Employment without any formal education and training.
2. Employment with access to education and training as part of the Unified Vocational Preparation (UVP) programme.
3. Work experience within the Youth Opportunities Programme (with day-release or block-release to

Further Education or its equivalent):

- (a) Work Experience on Employers' Premises.
 - (b) Community Projects.
 - (c) Training Workshops.
4. Ditto, but without day release to Further Education.
 5. Short courses in FE colleges, etc., as part of the Youth Opportunities Programme.
 6. Full-time vocational-preparation courses within FE colleges or schools — eg. City and Guilds Foundation Courses, RSA Vocational Preparation Courses (these may well involve short periods of work experience, etc.).
 7. Unemployment, but with entry to '21-hour' courses in colleges or schools.
 8. Unemployment.

The development of the Youth Training Scheme and of the '17+' qualification will modify this range of options to some extent. In addition, there are, of course, other options: eg. self-employment, Community Industry. The range can be extended still further if we include work within the informal economies (Watts, 1981a), leisure activities, voluntary service, part-time employment, etc., all of which can be combined in various ways with the other options.

Progression

2.7 Looked at from the perspective of learning, there is clearly a danger that as young people move between these various options, they may encounter aimless repetition of learning experiences, with consequent loss of motivation. This is particularly the case where there is pressure to secure placements of any kind. Accordingly, it is widely recognised that there is a need to build the concept of *progression* into the structures that are developed for 16-18-year-olds. There are three separable elements built into this concept:

1. *Variety* — that young people should not repeat learning experiences unless there is some purpose in doing so.
2. *Matching* — that learning experiences should be matched to individual young people's learning needs.
3. *Sequencing* — that each learning experience should build upon and extend the experience already gained.

Arguably, all three have to be present for genuine progression to occur; mere variety, for example, is not sufficient.

2.8 In broad terms, there are two ways in which the aim of achieving progression could be tackled. One is at a *structural* level, by ensuring that the different options are constructed in such a way that they build upon one another. The other is an *individual* level, by ensuring — through guidance — that the individual is able to find his or her way through the options available in a way that makes personal sense. In no sense are these two approaches mutually exclusive; indeed, we would argue that to be genuinely effective, each requires the other. But, it is important to recognise that, in principle, attempts *could* be made to achieve progression without paying much if any attention to guidance.

2.9 The Holland Report (MSC, 1977) was a major attempt to encourage progression at a structural level. By bringing a number of disparate schemes within a single framework, it hoped to facilitate progressive movement between them, and indeed suggested a number of 'possible progressions', for example, from an assessment and orientation phase (in an Employment Induction Course) through an experiential/exploratory phase (in a WEEP scheme) to a preparatory phase (in a short industrial course). It recognised, however, that 'in general, the modules are capable of linkage in almost any sequence, except that remedial education and employment induction (for those needing help of this kind) would be expected to precede others' (p.42).

2.10 Subsequently, efforts have also been made to structure progression not only *between* but also *within* schemes. For example, in the 'North Bellshire' WEEP scheme (a pseudonym) described by Knasel *et al.* (1982), trainees during their six months with the scheme are provided with an initial series of short work-experience placements in four different industries, and then choose to return to one of these industries for a longer period. Similar 'group WEEP' schemes have been organised elsewhere by other agencies — including, in a few instances, the Careers Service and FE colleges (see eg. NATFHE/MS, 1982, chapter 6).

2.11 As we saw in Chapter One, the Government has now announced (DES, 1981) that by the autumn of 1983, YOP is to be phased out in favour of a Youth Training Scheme. This scheme will provide one year's foundation training, including a minimum of three months' off-the-job training/further education. The notion of progression is clearly built into this structure too, particularly in the notion that schemes offering a limited range of opportunities should be grouped under 'managing agencies' able to co-ordinate these components into a coherent and broadly-based programme (MSC, 1982). The explicit linkage of the scheme to the other two objectives of the New Training Initiative — reform of apprenticeship and wider opportunities for adults — also points to the importance of structural mechanisms to support progression beyond the scheme (see also FEU, 1982).

2.12 If such structural approaches were to ignore guidance, they would work on the assumption that variety and sequencing would be achieved through the design of the schemes themselves, and that matching would be achieved by careful assessment and selection — in other words, the matching would be made *for* the young person, rather than *by* him or her. The selection ethos has indeed traditionally tended to be much stronger within education and training than has a guidance ethos. With the old '11-plus', for example, pupils did not choose which kind of school to go to; they were allocated on the basis of a supposedly objective assessment of their intelligence and aptitudes. Even subject choices within schools tend to be determined basically by the curricular structures of schools and the aptitudes of pupils as revealed in their attainments, despite the rhetoric of pupils' 'choices' and 'guidance' which surrounds them (eg. Woods, 1979).

2.13 The key element introduced by the concept of guidance is that young people should be actively involved in such decisions, and that they should be helped to take some responsibility for the decisions, with access to relevant information and with support in processing it. Significantly, all three of the structural interventions mentioned here — the Holland Report, the 'North Bellshire' WEEP scheme, and the plans for the Youth Training Scheme — stress the importance of guidance, as do other structural interventions like

the FEU's work in the field of 'vocational preparation', discussed briefly in Chapter One (para 1.7). Such assertions could, however, prove mere rhetoric — as with the school subject choices — unless close attention is paid to the role which guidance is to perform, and how it is to be effectively delivered.

The Role of Guidance

2.14 The basic role of guidance is that of *mediation* between the individual and the variety of opportunities open to him or her. In broad terms, two possible models for the role of guidance can be distinguished:

2.15 The first is a restricted model, in which guidance is designed simply to help young people to choose from a range of pre-packaged options. Guidance of the young person is not part of the process of *designing* the options; it is merely concerned with *choosing* between them. Guidance can thus become totally separated from 'opportunity provision'; all the opportunity providers need to do is to make available information on the basis of which a reasoned and informed choice can be made. This is the form which vocational guidance has traditionally taken; employers have provided information on what they have to offer, and guidance services have not in general sought to influence this provision, but instead have operated within the parameters set by it. It is also the form which educational guidance has in the past tended to take; its concern has been to help a student to choose a particular pre-designed course which would lead to a particular qualification and thence to a particular occupation or range of occupations. In this sense, educational guidance has in the past tended to be simply an adjunct of vocational guidance.

2.16 The second model, by contrast, is an extended one, in which guidance is seen as an interactive process through which individual needs and opportunity provision can be brought into harmony. The assumption is not simply that the individual should be fitted in somewhere within a range of existing opportunities, but also that a task of guidance is to articulate individuals' needs and — where these cannot be met within the existing range — to encourage opportunity providers to respond to them.

The scope for this approach in vocational guidance is fairly limited; the shape of occupational opportunities is in general determined by market or institutional forces rather than by the characteristics and preferences of the entering worker. In principle, however, there would seem to be more scope for such an extended, interactive approach in relation to educational guidance, where the needs and wants of the individual would seem to merit higher priority. Certainly it appears to be the approach which underlies the concept of educational guidance presented in FEU documents on vocational preparation, with — as we have seen in Chapter One (para 1.11) — their references to 'negotiation' and 'learning agendas'. It also underlies the concept of the role of educational guidance in adult and continuing education as presented in a recent report by ACACE (1979) entitled — significantly — *Links to learning*:

'If the first justification for better guidance services in continuing educational is that educators may tell their prospective clients what they have to offer, the second is that these prospective clients must be able to tell the educators what they want. Guidance services in continuing education should provide a two-way process, in which educators can promote their existing provision and learn about new demands' (p.11).

2.17 The key feature of the extended model of guidance is that the boundary between guidance and 'opportunity provision' becomes much more permeable than in the restricted model. Taken to its logical conclusion, it suggests that guidance should not take place simply *between* placements, but also *within* placements, and should even become an integral part of their 'curriculum'. Whereas in the restricted model the process of mediation tends to be intermittent, in the extended model it is more continuous, helping the opportunity providers to be responsive to the individuals' changing reactions and preferences. If learning opportunities are designed on the basis of academic disciplines or the demands of particular occupations, the restricted model is workable; if they are designed to respond to individual needs, and are hoping to sustain the motivation of students/trainees on this basis, the extended model would seem essential.

2.18 The difficulties in implementing the extended model should, however, be recognised. In practice, the opportunities available rarely match the range of individual needs. Indeed, what the individual often wants most is 'a good job', and it is precisely the lack of 'good jobs' which has created the space in which the 'needs' of young people are being more directly addressed. In this situation, those responsible for guidance may become all too aware of the gulf that exists between individual aspirations and what is available, and how limited are the real opportunities for those young people who have clear ideas of what they want. This can be profoundly dispiriting. It can also mean that, far from performing a mediation role, they get 'lost in the middle', appearing to young people as visible and accessible representatives of the structure that is frustrating them, and, to administrators and 'opportunity providers' as plaintive and soft-headed advocates of the 'unrealistic' demands of young people. If, therefore, the extended model is to be implemented, it requires an opportunity structure that is responsive to change, a recognition of the important role of guidance in facilitating such change, and mechanisms through which those responsible for guidance can participate in shaping the policies that determine the opportunity structure. One important such mechanism may be efforts to develop the guidance skills of opportunity providers — college lecturers, work-experience supervisors, etc. — so that guidance is built into the opportunity structure itself.

3 Guidance – What and Who?

Guidance – What and Who?

What is Guidance?

3.1 Before proceeding further, we need to define the term 'guidance' more clearly than we have to date, and to indicate the kinds of activities it can comprise. Such matters are covered more fully in the parallel FEU/NICEC manual on the place of guidance and tutoring (Miller, 1982), and readers interested in an extended discussion are referred to that manual. A summary of some of the key points is, however, necessary here. Although in this report we have a particular interest in considering guidance in relation to the concepts of 'learning' and 'progression', it is, in fact, related to a wider range of concerns.

3.2 Different people use the term 'guidance' in very different ways. Some, for example, contrast it to 'counselling', and use 'guidance' to describe directive forms of help as opposed to the non-directive forms of help represented by 'counselling'. This is *not* the sense in which we are using the term 'guidance' here. Instead, we use the term to refer to the range of activities through which people can be helped to make the decisions, and cope constructively with the transitions, that determine the course of their vocational, educational and personal development. Applying this to young people aged 16-18, three significant phrases within this definition would seem to warrant discussion.

3.3 (i) '*... the range of activities ...*'. The term 'guidance' was firmly established in British education by Morris (1955). In a seminal paper, Morris likened guidance to the help offered by the mountain guide who, in order to help the novice climber, *reviews* the novice's mountaineering experience, and offers *advice* based on the guide's own experience, *information* based on knowledge, and *training* based on a structure of graded skill. The underlying aim of the good mountain guide is to enable the climber to meet, on his or her own, the new challenges that mountaineering will inevitably pose.

3.4 This description illuminates well the reference in our definition to a 'range of activities'. In the case outlined by Morris, the person offering guidance offers to review the *status quo*, to offer advice and information, and to structure or manage learning

experiences. It is possible to refine this range further to include the following activities:

(a) *Taking action/sponsorship*. In some cases the most appropriate way in which to help a young person is to take direct action on his/her behalf. This might include telephoning a potential employer, or contacting the provider of relevant opportunities to discuss his/her needs. Often, if the underlying aim is being kept in mind, ways will be found to do it in such a way as to help the person to take action for him/herself next time (eg. by next time being present when the call is made).

(b) *Advice-giving*. While often over-used, there may be a place for making suggestions based on the helper's own knowledge and experience, especially if the basis for the suggestion is explained, and the young person is given an opportunity to explore its relevance/irrelevance to him/herself.

(c) *Teaching/training*. Some young people are disadvantaged in such matters as confidence in dealing with strangers. The guidance provider in this instance may well set up a structure, perhaps including role-play, where the young person can increasingly gain such confidence. Such structuring of learning experiences is the sense in which the term 'teaching/training' is used here.

(d) *Giving information*. Many young people lack the information necessary to establish preferences that might lead to choices and decisions. An important guidance activity is, therefore, to give clear and sound information without any evaluation or judgement on the part of the helper.

(e) *Counselling*. In order to come to a decision, many young people need to have an opportunity to explore their *thoughts* and *feelings* about their present situation, about each of the options available, and about the consequences of each alternative. 'Counselling' is the process of facilitating the exploration of such issues.

3.5 Some or all of these may at times become closely intermingled. Thus, for example, a student thinking of leaving college may seek *counselling* about alternative opportunities locally, may want to be *taught* job-seeking skills, may request *advice* about the best way of securing the levels of social-security benefits to which he or she is entitled, and may want *sponsorship* in dealing with the Department of Health and Social

Security to gain the benefits due.

3.6 The inclusion of 'teaching/training' in this list may raise some eye-brows, because guidance is often regarded as being separate from curriculum. Yet, Morris conceived of guidance as a philosophy of education, and not just a supplementary activity that takes place in individual interviewing rooms. Certainly some guidance will take place on an individual one-to-one basis; the aims of guidance can, however, infuse the curriculum itself.

3.7 So far, all the activities mentioned have been concerned with working directly with young people. In addition, though, it is possible for those providing guidance to help in a more indirect way by seeking to promote appropriate forms of 'systems change'. This involves attempting to change or influence procedures within an institution or scheme so as to meet more readily the needs of the young people it serves. It can be done either by *advocacy* on the part of a particular individual, or by general *feedback*, based on a broad range of guidance experiences. This kind of activity recognises that dilemmas facing students may at times be more constructively resolved not by working for change in individual students but by making changes in their environment.

3.8 (ii) '*... helped to make the decisions, and cope constructively with the transitions ...*'. Implicit in the concept of guidance is the facilitation of a process of self-direction or self-reliance. The emphasis is away from making decisions for individuals, and towards enabling individuals to make decisions for themselves. Guidance is thus based on the concept of individual differences, and asserts that resolution of individual dilemmas needs to be based on the recognition of the significance of the particular dilemma to the individual concerned. Such a recognition puts guidance work firmly within the framework of person-centred, rather than problem-centred, approaches to individual development. In other words, if two people are faced with a superficially similar situation (eg. unemployment), they are likely to react to that situation in different ways which are unique to themselves and are dependent on the varied factors that have influenced their personality and personal history.

3.9 If this is accepted, then it becomes clear that a person offering guidance to another cannot simply decide on the appropriate actions required to meet the individual's needs. The process of helping the individual assess his or her own needs for him/herself is a vital component of guidance work. Research that has been done in this area (eg. Truax and Carkhuff, 1967) indicates that a basic starting-point for such self-assessment is clear communication between the individual and the guidance practitioner. This clear communication requires the guidance practitioner to bring certain characteristics, qualities or conditions to the interaction.

3.10 The first condition for an effective guidance relationship is for the helper (eg. a tutor) to listen attentively to what the individuals (eg. a student) says, to take time to help to clarify what has been said, and not to pre-judge the student (eg. on the basis of appearance or past experience). This willingness to be responsive to the student indicates an *acceptance* of the need for the student to explore and a *respect* for the worth of the student's own experience.

3.11 The second condition for an effective relationship between (in this example) the tutor and the student is the tutor's willingness to try to appreciate how the student thinks and feels about the experience being related, and the tutor's capacity to communicate that appreciation and understanding to the student. Thus, if, for example, a student is talking warmly about his or her work-experience placement, the tutor needs to recognise the student's feeling of excitement and pride when his or her work was praised by the supervisor, and to communicate this awareness to the student: 'I see you felt proud of that ...'. This willingness and ability to check out and reflect the student's thoughts and feelings indicates that the tutor is trying to understand the unique world of the student — that is, to *empathise*.

3.12 The third condition for an effective relationship between the tutor and the student is the tutor's ability to be as natural as possible, within the limits of his or her role. This may become evident, for example, when the tutor is prepared to admit his or her lack of knowledge to the student, rather than to try to sustain the myth that anyone who offers help to another must

necessarily know – or appear to know – all the answers. Such preparedness to discuss something of oneself (eg. in this example, a lack of knowledge) indicates a willingness and ability to be *authentic* and *genuine*, and demonstrates to the student the tutor's essential humanity.

3.13 (iii) '... vocational, education and personal development ...'. We have already suggested in Chapter One that guidance can be broadly divided into three areas. They are:

- (a) *Vocational* guidance, focussed mainly around employment and around occupational destinations.
- (b) *Educational* guidance, focussed mainly around learning.
- (c) *Personal* guidance, focussed around other personal concerns.

The distinction is a conceptual one, and in practice the three areas are closely interwoven; for example, to gain entry into *employment* may require particular skills and knowledge to be *learned*, and such learning may be impeded by *personal problems* – which in turn may exacerbate such problems. It is also important to point out that although the term 'personal' in this classification is used as a residual category, in practice all three forms of guidance are deeply 'personal'; indeed, this is implicit in the way in which the term 'Personal Guidance Base' as used by Levy (1980) refers essentially not to 'other personal concerns' but to 'learning'.

3.14 Nonetheless, the conceptual distinction is useful, not least because – as we shall see shortly – it is reflected in the role of the guidance agencies. Also worth noting in our definition of 'guidance' is the word 'development'. Certainly some guidance work will be

crisis-oriented, dealing with particular problems as they occur. Implicit in our concept, however, is the notion that guidance should, wherever possible, aim to be *developmental*, helping young people over a period of time to develop skills, knowledge, etc. which will help them to surmount other problems in the future. It can thus perform a preventive as well as a remedial role.

Who Provides Guidance?

3.15 Guidance in the sense we have defined it here is offered to young people by a wide variety of agencies and individuals. Some will be conscious that they are offering guidance, in the sense that it is a formal part of their professional role, for which they have been trained. Others will offer guidance more incidentally as part of their normal relationship with the young person; this relationship may be either a formal or informal one. In broad terms, therefore, the range of guidance providers can be divided into three groups: specialist providers, 'first-in-line' providers, and informal providers.

3.16 '*Specialist*' providers are people whose major responsibility is to provide guidance. A key guidance agency for young people aged 16-18 is the LEA-based Careers Service, which has a statutory responsibility to provide vocational guidance in the transition between education and employment. In addition, Careers Educators (Careers Teachers in schools, and Careers Advisers in colleges – where separate from the LEA-based Careers Service) have an important professional role to play in the area of vocational guidance, even though their training may be more limited and their

Figure 3.1: Guidance roles of some 'specialists'

	VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE	EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE	PERSONAL GUIDANCE
CAREERS OFFICER	Statutory responsibility	Possible involvement	Limited involvement
CAREERS EDUCATOR	Responsibility	Possible involvement	Limited involvement
STUDENT COUNSELLOR	Possible involvement	Possible involvement	Responsibility
SOCIAL WORKER	Unlikely involvement	Unlikely involvement	Responsibility

careers role in some cases be joined to a substantial teaching role in some other subject. In the area of personal guidance, the main specialists include Student Counsellors within colleges, and — for some young people — Social Workers. In the case of educational guidance, there is no one professional group that could claim a specialist responsibility, though some of the other professional groups mentioned here may find themselves involved in educational guidance work to some extent. The general areas of guidance covered by these various specialists are outlined in Figure 3.1.

3.17 'First-in-line' providers are professional staff whose contractual primary task is other than providing guidance to young people, but who find that their work increasingly demands some involvement in guidance matters. Examples are Course and Subject Tutors, Work Supervisors, and Youth and Community Workers. Often their guidance role arises incidentally in the course of continuing relationships built around some other task, so making access easier. An important part of the role in guidance terms is to know when and where to refer the young person to a specialist who has more expertise. Referral is not always possible, however, either because there is no appropriate specialist available or because the young person does not want it. Even where it is possible, the tutor may prefer to maintain the contact with the young person, perhaps with support from the specialist. And even when referral takes place, there is likely to be some continuing support role required of the 'first-in-line' provider.

3.18 It is difficult to draw boundaries round the guidance role of these 'first-in-line' providers in terms of its vocational, educational, or personal focus, although the balance may be influenced to some extent by the setting: Course and Subject Tutors may be more likely to get involved in educational matters, Supervisors in vocational aspects, and Youth and Community Workers in personal matters. Frequently, they will have received little, if any, training for their guidance roles, though the MSC is beginning to provide training in guidance and support skills for Work Supervisors (Knsel, 1982), and the FEU has published a manual on guidance skills in tutoring for use in staff development (Miller, 1982).

3.19 Another agency with a more intermittent 'first-in-line' contact with young people which may be involved in guidance is the Jobcentre. Its staff rarely have any guidance training, but are frequently in a position to influence choices by the contacts they have with young people and the specialist information they possess. This is particularly the case because some young people, as they come to see themselves more as adults, may view Jobcentres as a more appropriate place to seek employment opportunities than the offices of the Careers Service. Staff in such centres need to be aware of the potential influence they can exercise.

3.20 It is important also to recognise that many people seek and receive guidance in essentially informal ways in the course of chatting with a friend, with members of their family, and so on. Indeed, research surveys have demonstrated that most young people prefer to go for help to such *informal providers*, rather than to specialist or 'first-in-line' providers, especially in the personal area. Thus, when Porteous and Fisher (1980) asked a sample of 15/16-year-olds to whom they would generally prefer to go with a problem, parents were nominated as first choice by 43%, and going to 'a friend' by 32%; official sources of help — such as school, social services, churches, and family doctors — were not used much by comparison. On the other hand, when another survey asked YOP trainees about the more 'technical' matter of who had initially informed them about YOP, only 18% mentioned family and friends, while 57% mentioned the Careers Service, 5% Social/Youth Workers, 5% the Jobcentre/Employment Office, 4% teachers, and 3% scheme personnel (the remaining 8% cited the media) (Into Work, 1980).

3.21 In general, it would seem that the specialist and 'first-in-line' providers are likely to have a stronger role than informal providers in relation to hard information in the vocational and educational areas, though young people are still likely to want to talk these matters through with family and friends, and may be heavily influenced by them. In the personal area, they are more likely to turn initially to family and friends, but may at times like to seek help from an adult they know in a more formal setting (eg. at college or at work), or from a specialist who has particular expertise, who

offers a contract of confidentiality, and whom they can readily avoid meeting again if they so wish.

3.22 Seen in this light, the individual young person stands in the centre of a loose network of adults. Of these, some may have an assigned guidance role (eg. a Social Worker), some may have an assigned professional role of some other kind (eg. a Tutor or Supervisor), some may offer professional expertise which is available for the young person to call on if he or she wants to do so (eg. a Student Counsellor), and some may exert influence by virtue of being involved in the young person's circle of 'significant others' (eg. a friend of the family). The form of help offered by these different people is likely to vary. It will be influenced by the background and training (if any) of the individual concerned, and the organisational framework he or she works within. For instance, Social Workers and Probation Officers have legal responsibilities that are likely to affect the kind of relationship they can offer, and the range of guidance skills they use is likely to differ from those used by, say, a Careers Officer. The forms of help will also be influenced by whether the relationship with the young person is an episodic or sustained one, and by the kinds of information which the different individuals have access to about the young person.

3.23 It is accordingly important for all those with a guidance role to be aware that there may be other guidance providers involved in the life of the individual, and that these may be providing different 'messages'. Such diversity can enrich the range of information and help on which the young person can draw; it can also at times, as we pointed out in Chapter One (para 1.12), be a source of confusion, duplication, and competition. We have come across one young person with whom as many as 19 specialist and 'first-in-line' helpers had been involved over a few short years, each bringing their own particular view of the situation and preferred strategies for intervention. To have three or four such helpers involved at any one time is quite common. If there is no contact between such helpers and no clarification of their distinctive roles, the result can be conflict, misunderstanding and frustration.

3.24 At the same time, it is important to recognise that the ultimate aim of attempts to formalise guidance

provision must be not to make the web of 'help' so finely-spun that it enmeshes the young person ever more totally, but to ensure that young people are able to call on the help they need at the time they need it. In the end, if young people are to be encouraged to take responsibility for their own lives – which, we have argued, is the aim of guidance – they have to have the right to call on or reject help as they wish. Those in guidance roles have to take care to exercise restraint and sensitivity so as not to intrude unduly upon the young person's private experience and autonomy. The next two chapters of this report will be concerned with policies about the co-ordination of guidance services. But, whatever form these policies may take, the ultimate responsibility for 'pulling it all together' has to lie with individual young people themselves.

4 A Personal Guidance Base – Some Models

A Personal Guidance Base

– Some Models

4.1 In Chapter One it was suggested that the possible features of a Personal Guidance Base as envisaged by Levy (1980) were five-fold:

- (a) The notion of a basic *location* which young people could visit when they needed help.
 - (b) The notion of *continuity*: that young people would continue to come back to the base for help at various times, particularly between placements.
 - (c) The central focus on *learning* and on *progression*.
 - (d) The notion of *inter-agency collaboration*.
 - (e) The notion of *Further Education's special role*.
- Consideration of feature (e) will be deferred to Chapter Five. The present chapter will focus on features (a)-(d), and will explore some possible forms which a Personal Guidance Base might take within a recognisable geographical and administrative area, such as that represented by a local authority.

4.2 It is immediately apparent that there are some tensions between the four PGB features we are concerned with here. For instance, the principle of continuity might be adversely affected by basing guidance services at a particular location; such a location might not be accessible to all youngsters, and might acquire an identity – associated with its institutional affiliations, or the kind of young people who go there – that might deter some youngsters from going to it on any 'continuous' basis. Again, the principle of continuity might seem to be best promoted by giving particular responsibility to one agency; yet, the inter-professional jealousies that this might produce could hamper the development of inter-agency collaboration.

4.3 It seems important, therefore, to establish whether a Personal Guidance Base is primarily a *location*, an *agency*, or a *concept*. We take the stance that it is in essence a concept focussed around the need for continuity in guidance centred on (but not exclusively concerned with) learning and progression. The issues relating to location and agency concern possible ways of implementing this concept: in the last resort, they are means rather than ends. Policies relating to allocation of responsibilities for guidance of low achievers aged 16-18 can accordingly be analysed in terms of their stance on these two issues, which we define in more precise terms as follows:

- (a) Whether the basic *responsibility* for ensuring the provision of guidance is allocated to a single providing agency or shared between several.
- (b) Whether the *delivery* of guidance for any given individual is organised to take place at a single *location* or at several.

4.4 On this basis, four alternative strategies can be distinguished, as shown in Figure 4.1: a single-agency, single-location strategy (A); a single-agency, multi-location strategy (B); a multi-agency, single-location strategy (C); and a multi-agency, multi-location strategy (D). Each of these strategies will be discussed in turn; outlining in theoretical terms some of the options available; indicating the interventions required to implement them; drawing, where appropriate, on the experience of relevant examples of practice encountered in our field visits; relating them to some examples drawn from other countries; suggesting some of the strategy's possible costs and benefits;

Figure 4.1: Four strategies for a local guidance policy

		Agency (responsibility for ensuring the provision of guidance)	
		Single	Multi
Location (delivery of guidance)	Single	A	C
	Multi	B	D

and exploring how well the strategy satisfies the criteria outlined by Levy.

Strategy A: Single-Agency, Single-Location

4.5 In Strategy A, responsibility for guidance is allocated to a single agency which delivers guidance at a single location. This could, in principle, be a new agency, or the extension of the role of an existing one. Within current provision, the nearest approximation to this model is the statutory provision of the Careers Service in the area of vocational guidance. The service is usually sited in a set of offices within each town or district, and although Careers Officers go out to see young people in schools, YOP schemes, etc., their base remains a single location which young people can visit for a range of services — including information, counselling, and placement related to formal educational courses and (particularly) employment.

4.6 In principle, a local authority could take the view that the role of the Careers Service should be extended to cover *all* the functions of guidance for, in particular, low achievers aged 16-18. It is important to recognise, however, that this would require a very considerable extension of the Careers Service's remit. Its work has traditionally been focussed around paid employment, and has, indeed, tended to be evaluated in terms of placement into jobs and other opportunities. Careers Officers are not trained nor usually expected to provide skilled counselling on personal problems like home difficulties, relationship problems, etc.; some do get involved in these matters — partly because of their continuing contact with particular young people over time, and partly because some personal problems become inextricably linked with matters relating more directly to the search for paid employment — but they are usually encouraged to refer such a case elsewhere when it starts to become too time-consuming and/or when they feel they are getting into areas where they do not have the resources or the expertise to be of help.

4.7 Even if the extension of role were limited to what we have called 'educational guidance', new roles and new skills would be needed. Careers Officers are

accustomed to informing young people about formal educational courses and their relationship to employment prospects, but they certainly are not used to helping young people to draw up 'learning agendas' and analysing learning opportunities in terms of the skills they can develop. Where Careers Services are showing interest in developing such a role, it seems to be in collaboration with other agencies — in other words, to represent one of the other strategies to be discussed later in this chapter.

4.8 The option of applying Strategy A to any other agency than the Careers Service is at present not strictly open, since all LEAs are mandated to provide a Careers Service, and, therefore, to locate responsibility and delivery of guidance wholly elsewhere would be impossible. The only way in which it could be done within present legislative constraints is by modifying Strategy A to produce, say, a Vocational Guidance Base provided by the Careers Service, an Educational Guidance Base provided by (perhaps) Further Education, and a Personal Guidance Base (in a limited sense, i.e. *excluding* vocational and educational guidance) provided by (perhaps) the Youth and Community Service. We will return to this possibility briefly in Chapter Five. In the meantime, however, we simply note that we have found no LEA adopting this approach; and that if there were any communication or co-ordination between the agencies, it would once again come under one of the other strategies.

4.9 It would seem, then, that Strategy A meets few of Levy's criteria. It certainly offers a central *location*, and maintains *continuity*, but within present structures, it is difficult to see how it could have a central focus on *learning* and *progression*. Any concept of *inter-agency collaboration* is — by definition — excluded. It is also a *dirigiste* approach, based essentially on centralising decision-making. It offers the benefit of bureaucratic tidiness, but makes little allowance for the ways in which — as we have seen in Chapter Three — young people seek help in practice.

Strategy B: Single-Agency, Multi-Location

4.10 In Strategy B, responsibility for ensuring the provision of guidance is allocated to a single agency,

but the agency acts not only as a provider of guidance but also as a co-ordinator of guidance which may be offered by a variety of other agencies at a number of different locations.

4.11 The main instance we have identified where such an approach is being implemented is Coventry. In co-operation with the Director of Education, a working party of secondary heads proposed that secondary schools should be developed as 'pastoral bases' for all young people up to 18+. The proposal recognised that 'whether this will be acceptable to the pupils beyond that will depend upon the nature of the relationship forged between 14+ and 16+, and schools may need to review their pastoral-care arrangements for this age group'. It also noted that 'in particular they may consider the possibility of using other adults from the community as the agents for many of the face-to-face contacts with older pupils, since these adults may have more experience of the kind of placements in which pupils may be located'. The Careers Service is being 'devolved' to schools, so that Careers Officers are able to strengthen these 'pastoral bases' (Temple and Sanday, 1981).

4.12 What seems to be envisaged here, then, is a structure under which pupils, when they leave school, continue to regard the school as a guidance base to which they can return when they need help. The school's responsibility, however, is not necessarily to provide all the guidance, but rather to monitor it, and to ensure that it is taking place somewhere. The concept has not yet been implemented sufficiently to enable its effects in practice to be clearly assessed. There have, however, been some anxieties on the part of Careers Officers about their devolution to schools and about the effects this might have on their professional identity — and particularly their neutrality in the eyes of young people; there have also been concerns that the concept is likely to be implemented with varying degrees of commitment by different schools, which begin from very different starting-points in terms of the quality of their existing guidance services.

4.13 Meanwhile, it is worth noting that a very similar concept has been applied in Sweden, where school-based counsellors have been given a formal

responsibility to follow up leavers aged 16-18 who do not go on to the upper secondary school. Such work is 'actively outgoing': the counsellor is required to make periodic contact with them, and to put them in touch with other relevant services (eg. the employment service). This kind of work can be very time-consuming, and in some areas, special counsellors have been appointed to co-ordinate it and to work particularly with unemployed young people in a more intensive way than school-based counsellors are able to do (Watts, 1981b).

4.14 In Denmark, too, attempts are being made to introduce an 'extended school guidance system' under which school counsellors are made responsible for following up their leavers for two years after leaving the comprehensive school at 16/17. At the time when one of us (AGW) visited Denmark in December 1980, the system had operated for some five years in Herlev, and had subsequently been introduced by over half the local authorities in the country. In Herlev the counsellors had been given some limited extra payment for the additional work involved, and were obliged to contact all former pupils at least twice — in the October immediately after leaving school, and in the subsequent October. On top of this, they were expected to remain in regular contact with the youngsters who were unemployed, or in jobs that did not provide training; it was estimated that this involved extended contacts with about one in every eight leavers. In the school visited, the counsellor carried out these extended contacts mainly through telephone calls (where this was possible), and through arranging for youngsters to come to the school to see her personally. It was clear that the system depended a great deal on the personal energy, commitment and 'approachability' of the school counsellor concerned.

4.15 It would seem that at least two major issues arise in relation to this approach. First, in so far as the guidance base is to act as a provider of guidance, will young people be motivated to regard one particular agency as their 'base', and to return to it from time to time? The school in this respect has the advantages of continuity and familiarity; on the other hand, precisely because of this, it may be unattractive to young people who either have felt 'failure' at school or who associate it with dependency and child-adult

relationships which they are trying to escape. Some may even resent, and attempt to evade, schools' attempts to monitor what is happening to them, regarding it as an intrusion of their privacy.

4.16 Second, there is the issue of resources. For teachers to keep track of individuals who have left school requires considerable organisational back-up — not least in terms of telephones, secretarial facilities, petrol allowances, etc. — and time. Unless these are provided, and paid for, the monitoring function is likely to be ineffective.

4.17 Beyond these matters, there is also the issue of the attitudes of other agencies. Will they all acknowledge the 'first among equals' status which such a strategy implies? Within present structures, it seems that such a status is not likely to emerge from informal consensus: it will have to be applied by policy at LEA level. And even if it is applied on paper, it may be subverted in practice. Then again, what will be the extent of the co-ordinator's 'power' over the co-ordinated? Will the grounds on which the co-ordinator is chosen be generally understood and accepted. For example, if the choice is made essentially on grounds of access — as in the case of schools — will this prevent agencies thinking that the choice reflects a claim to superior guidance skills? Tensions are perhaps particularly likely where the guidance base is also a provider of opportunities, in competition with other providers. This is certainly true of schools, which may be offering courses in competition with those in FE colleges and other opportunities elsewhere; it would also apply to FE colleges themselves.

4.18 The Careers Service is, perhaps, in a strategic position in this respect, because of its neutrality; though, since its location is often geographically removed from the pathways of young people's day-to-day lives, it may be difficult to establish its credibility as a 'base'. Moreover, its association with vocational rather than educational and personal guidance is a further hurdle that would have to be surmounted. Nonetheless, it is perhaps questionable whether Sweden or Denmark would have felt the need to move towards their extended school guidance systems if they had had a service comparable to the Careers Service in Britain (which they do not).

4.19 It is noteworthy in this respect that the Warnock Committee (1973) recommended that the Careers Officer should be designated as a 'named person' to whom handicapped young people (and their parents) could turn for help during the period after leaving school. The task of the 'named person' would be to advise on which service or professional to approach for help in relation to any of a wide range of needs — including employment, health, and personal and social relationships. The Careers Officer should carry on this function until satisfied that the young person no longer required a 'named person' or that the function had been assumed by another professional. The Government rejected this proposal, but nonetheless it provides an interesting articulation of the Strategy B model.

4.20 Another pertinent proposal is that made by Hayes *et al.* (1982) in discussing ways of structuring guidance before, during and following the 'traineeship' that is to be offered within the Youth Training Scheme. They suggest that the 'guidance specialist' (whose professional identity they do not specify) might transfer responsibility for guidance to line managers for the period of the traineeship, possibly acting in a consultancy role to the line managers where appropriate during this period, and then picking up the main responsibility again at the end of the traineeship.

4.21 In this connection, it is also worth noting that *within* the proposed traineeship, the concept of 'managing agencies' as recommended in the *Youth task group report* (MSC, 1982) bears some potential resemblance to Strategy B. The responsibilities of managing agencies include that of 'ensuring trainees' access to support and advice during and on completion of programmes'. They will also be responsible for ensuring in organisational terms that 'placements are in line with trainees' needs', and for recording and certifying their progress. In effect, therefore, the managing agencies seem to be envisaged in part as a kind of PGB for the duration of the traineeship, in terms of responsibility, if not delivery. The MSC's hope is that the managing agencies will include many major employers, but also groups of smaller employers, other organisations (eg. Chambers of Commerce, Industrial Training Boards, Group Training Associations, or voluntary organisations), and 'new organisations'; where

sufficient agencies of this kind do not offer themselves, the MSC will assume the responsibility itself. How far these agencies will assume PGB-type roles in guidance terms is unclear, but the potential is there.

4.22 Returning to the PGB criteria, it would seem that Strategy B satisfies most of them. It certainly provides for a basic *location* (though this may be different for different young people) and *continuity*. It also provides for *inter-agency collaboration*, and this was clearly central to the Warnock Committee's concept; the committee suggested that such collaboration might be facilitated by setting up training courses, covering skills from a range of relevant disciplines, which would be attended by practitioners from educational, social and careers services. The questionable issue is that of the focus on *learning* and *progression*, since no one agency seems at present to have sufficient 'primacy' in the educational guidance area to establish a claim in this area to the co-ordinating role envisaged in the strategy. If, however, the possibility of referral and even of transfer was emphasised, and if it were made absolutely clear that 'primacy' implied a 'contact point' rather than any superiority in skill or status, this might not matter. As with Strategy A, Strategy B implies a *dirigiste* approach, but it does provide more flexibility to recognise and respect the variety of sources from which young people seek help — particularly when, as with for example the Warnock Committee's concept, it is possible to transfer co-ordinating responsibility to another agency where this seems appropriate.

Strategy C: Multi-Agency, Single-Location

4.23 In Strategy C, the responsibility for guidance is shared among a number of agencies, but they are brought together beneath one roof to staff jointly a 'guidance centre' where young people can have ready access to a range of helpers.

4.24 According to Pilley (1982), this is the approach being adopted in France following the Schwartz Report. Multi-disciplinary agencies are being set up at a local level — involving careers advisers, industrial trainers, social and community workers, and others — which will work both with young people themselves

and with those working with young people. Each agency will serve a community of around 100,000 people. One of its major functions is to provide a single place to which young people can go for information on a wide range of topics — health, sex, drugs, housing, the arts, work, etc. For the time being, the number of such agencies is to be limited and concentrated in deprived areas.

4.25 Again, in Scotland, efforts are being made to set up a Youth Enquiry Service which will provide a variety of information, advice and counselling services — including stimulation for young people in the creation and development of their own activities — by inviting a variety of existing agencies (including FE colleges, libraries, social-work agencies, the Careers Service and the Community Education Service) to pool resources. The ideal envisaged is a YES shop within a busy shopping area, but more modest alternatives are also being encouraged. So far there are over thirty experimental YES initiatives, most of them relatively modest ones at this stage. Attempts are being made to strike a balance between quick access to a full range of services, and avoidance of over-associating and filling the outlets with 'professionals'. In general, it is envisaged that the staff complement for a YES outlet might include a variety of full-time, part-time and voluntary staff, and that the regular workers should be supplemented by a professional support team including a Social Worker, a Careers Officer, Youth and Community Workers, and others. The hope is that the employers of these specialists will permit them to spend some time in work associated with the YES outlet so that they can provide the basis of a professional counselling network and can also help in developing local information materials etc. (Community Education Council, n.d.).*

4.26 Within England, a different but related example of this kind of approach is the Row Centre in Sheffield. Situated on a city-centre site, it includes a café, games rooms, and activity rooms, and was set up by the City Council via its FE Sub-Committee to provide unemployed young people with somewhere they could

*Further details of the Youth Enquiry Service can be obtained from the Community Education Council, 4 Queensferry Street, Edinburgh EH2 9PA.

meet instead of drifting around the streets. Its staff of eight are drawn from the Careers Service, from Further Education, and from the Youth and Community Service. MSC-sponsored Employment Induction Courses are run on the premises; beyond this, the staff work informally with the young people, and because of the range of professional backgrounds they encompass, and the range of expertise and of contacts this gives them, they feel they are able to respond more flexibly and readily to a wider range of needs than would otherwise be the case.

4.27 The Bow Centre is thus not set up specifically as a 'guidance centre': it is primarily a social centre, and also (to a limited extent) an 'opportunity provider'. It is because of these wider functions that it is able to operate to some extent as a guidance centre; young people are attracted to the centre for a variety of reasons, and the guidance is able to grow organically out of informal relationships or relationships set up for more tangible purposes. This informal, voluntary character has advantages from a guidance point-of-view, but it makes it impossible to provide a systematic base for monitoring of progress, etc. Moreover, the centre, like all such social centres, tends to be 'colonised' by particular groups of young people, who deter or even repel others. As one of the staff members told us:

'For all my ideas about how such a centre would operate and be seen by the clients, it's determined to a significant extent by how the "users" are using it and seeing it. We might think the Bow should be available to all young people in Sheffield, and some people did think that. But young people are in sub-cultures, and these determine who comes and how they use it.'

In addition, access to the Centre is of course limited to those who know about it, are confident enough to travel to it, and have enough cash to make the journey.

4.28 Other issues arise too. With any centre staffed by a variety of agencies, there are likely to be difficulties arising from the different organisational styles to which members of these agencies are accustomed. For example, the Careers Service tends to run on relatively formal lines, whereas the Youth and Community Service stresses flexible and informal relationships

with young people. In the case of the Bow Centre, this resulted initially in what a member of the team described as 'a pulling in different directions'. Again, different agencies have different values, and different policies on such matters as confidentiality. Are such styles, values and policies to be encouraged to co-exist, or are they to be reconciled and integrated in some way? If the latter, what will be the relationship between the workers in the centre and their professional colleagues 'back home'? And, whether the aim is co-existence or integration, what process is needed for this aim to be achieved; how useful, for example, are joint training events and/or assistance from an external consultant?

4.29 In terms of Levy's criteria, Strategy C satisfies that of *location*, though — as we have suggested — there may be problems regarding accessibility. There may also be problems regarding *continuity*. If young people do not — for whatever reason — choose to come back to the base, contact may be lost; and the fact that the main reason attracting them to it is likely to be the social centre it provides could at times be a disadvantage in this respect as well as, at other times, an advantage. A central focus on *learning* and *progression* could, in principle, be a feature of this strategy, particularly if it was the focal point of an integrated policy for the centre. (This is not, however, the case at the Bow Centre.) Finally, the strategy certainly facilitates *inter-agency collaboration*. Indeed, it permits such collaboration to be explored and developed by the practitioners, rather than being imposed from above. The LEA can, if it wishes, see its role as being simply to bring the agencies together under one roof, and then to give them the freedom to develop appropriate forms of collaboration in an organic way.

Strategy D: Multi-Agency, Multi-Location

4.30 In the final strategy, Strategy D, both the responsibility for and the delivery of guidance are shared among a number of different agencies and locations. This can imply some kind of free-market system, in which a variety of agencies are made available to young people, who are encouraged to make use of whichever ones they wish — or indeed,

to ignore them all, if they so prefer. This free-market approach can, however, be modified to some extent, while still remaining within the boundaries of Strategy D, by interventions designed to achieve either *communication* or *co-ordination*.

4.31 An example of an intervention at the level of *communication* is a town in the South-East where a network of scheme organisers involved in YOP has been set up. As a Careers Officer who has become an FE Lecturer in the area told us:

'We had the College, Community Projects, Training Workshop, Local Authority representation (from WEEP), Skill Centres and Careers Officers. It was linked by Careers and we set it up so we could talk amongst ourselves. Careers controlled entry and could pass on information. Schemes could pass back information to us about trainees' progress. I had to watch the Training Workshop, for example, and the Skill Centre, because they had the problem of filling places and they wouldn't always be forthcoming with information about trainees who might be better placed elsewhere on YOP. That's why you need the neutrality of Careers.'

By encouraging the exchange of information, and discussion of practices regarding monitoring etc., scheme organisers were beginning to become much more familiar with the scope of other contributors to the programme. Meetings were arranged in different locations represented by the participants in the network, and this enabled them to see, often for the first time, what the different agencies offered and how it was provided. This meant that schemes could begin to offer trainees information about other parts of YOP which could help the trainees to formulate their next steps. We were told that the trainees still often went to the Careers Service to 'talk it through', but frequently they had a much clearer idea than previously of what kind of opportunity might prove suitable.

4.32 It is interesting in this example to note the ways in which the Careers Service – because of its perceived neutrality – is performing the role of network co-ordinator and is also seen as having a special guidance role. These two roles give it an especially central position, but without the implication – as in Strategy B – that it is *the* guidance base for

the young people themselves.

4.33 It is also interesting to note two absences from this particular network. The first was that, although employers offering large numbers of WEEP placements were well-represented, those offering few were not; this was probably unavoidable. The second was the absence of the Youth and Community Service, which was more avoidable and more serious. Similar gaps have appeared in other areas known to us where similar networking initiatives have been set up: the nature of the 'missing agencies' vary from area to area, but they are noticed, and can seriously weaken the network's effectiveness. Frequently they lead to intense speculation about the reasons behind the absences. Such reasons may relate to rivalries *within* agencies, which make the selection of a representative difficult to agree upon, or to rivalries *between* agencies, which make representation in the network unappealing. Both seemed to be present in this particular case:

'They had internal problems and we didn't know whom to ask to represent the agency. They see themselves as people who know kids and see themselves as the ones who advise kids.'

This kind of speculation is all the more intense because the real reasons for the absences can be readily 'glossed over' in voluntary networks which offer a wide range of plausible excuses for non-attendance and where no sanctions can be applied.

4.34 In the case of this particular town, the networking approach was concerned with enabling different agencies to communicate and understand each other better, and was initiated essentially at a practitioner level, with minimal interference in the autonomy of the agencies concerned. In other places, however, initiatives have been concerned not just with communication but with *co-ordination*, and this has required policy decisions at a LEA level.

4.35 An example of a co-ordination approach is Humberside, where a 16-19 Co-ordinator has been appointed, and where a 16-19 Curriculum Development Group with a variety of working policies has been established within the LEA to examine 16-19 provision. The working parties have included ones on 'profile assessment', on 'staff role and development', and on

'guidance, counselling and careers', and have included representatives from all the major agencies involved – schools, FE colleges, the Careers Service, the Youth and Community Service, employers, trade unions, MSC, etc. One initiative has been to develop a common approach to profiling, based on a common profiling record. Another has been the formation of a counselling and guidance training team aiming to provide an authority-wide resource available for training events and for 'in-house' support for staff working in the institutions involved in vocational preparation.

4.36 At the time of writing, the latter initiative was confined to agencies under LEA control and no attempt had yet been made to involve staff from MSC-sponsored schemes. The hesitancy in involving LEA – and MSC-funded staff in joint ventures is itself significant. Even within the group of agencies under LEA control, the initiative had indicated some of the problems which have to be overcome with this kind of approach. Initial meetings of people from different agencies revealed the different structures, attitudes and approaches to which they were accustomed, and their different views of guidance/counselling and its place in vocational preparation. The resulting discussions and arguments were not merely semantic; they expressed real differences of understanding and purpose which had to be resolved before any kind of partnership based on mutual understanding and negotiated common goals could be launched. Other issues had to be addressed too: why and how had the individuals present been selected? How far were they there to represent the interests of their agencies or to offer individual contributions? To what extent were

they accountable as individuals for any decisions taken by the group which might affect the interests of their agency? What authority had the group for implementing or recommending policy changes?

4.37 The process of addressing these issues proved valuable in its own right in terms of changing mutual perceptions. It has also resulted in the development of a training team which has resolved to continue to work wherever possible on a cross-agency basis; in other words, team members when working in a training/consultancy role will usually work not alone but in small teams containing representatives of more than one agency.

4.38 These two examples of the application of Strategy D indicate the variety of forms it can take. In relation to Levy's criteria, it does not provide a basic *location*, but it aims to ensure that, at whatever location a young person comes to for help, he or she is able if necessary to be placed in touch with other agencies in a position to offer the help he or she needs. The accent, in short, is on *inter-agency collaboration*, in the hope that this will also satisfy the criterion of *continuity*. The possibility of close and active involvement of scheme providers in their guidance role means that there is considerable scope for focussing on *learning and progression*. The innovation can be either at a practitioner or at a policy level.

The PGB Criteria Revisited

4.39 If we compare our conclusions about the four

Figure 4.2: Extent to which Strategies A-D meet Levy's PGB criteria

	Strategy A	Strategy B	Strategy C	Strategy D
Location	✓	✓	✓✓	×
Continuity	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓
Learning/progression	?	✓✓	✓✓	✓
Inter-agency collaboration	×	✓	✓	✓✓

strategies in relation to Levy's PGB criteria, the results are as shown in Figure 4.2: (see previous page). The ratings here are crude and general, and need to be viewed in the light of the caveats expressed in our earlier discussions. In general, however, it seems that Strategy B offers the closest approach to a Personal Guidance Base as envisaged by Levy, but that Strategies C and D also satisfy most of the criteria; the least satisfactory strategy, in these terms, is Strategy A. The choice between Strategies B-D would seem to depend on the primacy attached to the criteria of location (strongest in Strategy C), of continuity (strongest in Strategy B), and of inter-agency collaboration (strongest in Strategy D).

4.40 We are also now in a position to make some further comments on a number of the questions raised in Chapter One concerning each of these PGB criteria.

4.41 First, regarding *location*, the notion that there should be one place in an area which young people can visit for guidance of all kinds is unrealistic. No single place is likely to be accessible and attractive to all young people, and to be able to offer the variety of kinds of help that may be required at different times. Moreover, an attempt to establish such a place would suggest separating guidance geographically from 'opportunity provision', and while at times young people may prefer to seek help on neutral territory, at others they may prefer to seek help from people who they know on a more day-to-day basis and are accustomed to meeting in relation to other activities — whether work, study or social. In this respect it is interesting to note that even at the Bow Centre — which is the nearest example we have found in England and Wales to the central multi-agency guidance 'location' envisaged in Strategy C — considerable stress was placed on the centre's social activities. Any such range of activities, however, is bound to be restricted, and, therefore, to draw in a restricted range of young people. There may indeed be a strong case for guidance centres of this kind, but they are not likely to be sufficient.

4.42 More important, perhaps, is the issue of *continuity*: that instead of young people moving incoherently between a variety of agencies, and perhaps 'falling through the net' altogether, there

should be some continuing contact which will enable attention to be paid to developing needs based on a familiarity built up over a period of time. Strategy B would seem to offer advantages in this respect, especially if implemented in a reasonably flexible way. There are, however, value issues here which need to be addressed, linked to our comments at the end of Chapter Three. In particular, is the emphasis on continuity based on a concern that young people are not getting the help they need, or on a desire to control and 'keep an eye on' them? In which way will it be perceived by the young people themselves? Have young people the right *not* to seek help if they so wish? At the very least, it would seem that measures designed to achieve continuity should be implemented in a way which:

- (a) recognises that young people cannot be forced to go to any particular place for help;
- (b) is sensitive to young people's right to control their own lives and seek help if, where and when they wish; and
- (c) makes it possible to transfer co-ordinating responsibility to another agency where this seems appropriate to the young person's needs and wishes. These points suggest that Strategy B needs to be adapted to incorporate strong elements of Strategy D.

4.43 The third criterion — the central focus on *learning and progression* — is not especially well-satisfied by any of the strategies. Arguably, however, if it is to be implemented, it is essential that such guidance should be given *during* placements in particular schemes rather than just *before* and *after* schemes, and given *on* schemes as well as *off* schemes. The strength of Strategy D in this respect is that it makes it possible to involve a much wider range of guidance agencies — including schemes themselves — than is the case for example in Strategy C.

4.44 For this reason, the criterion of *inter-agency collaboration* is also more fully met in Strategy D than in the other strategies. It is not, however, likely to be an easy criterion to implement, as attempts to set up inter-agency teams in other fields — notably the health service — have demonstrated. In the case of guidance, the different agencies each have distinctive procedures and styles arising out of a complex mix of circumstances, constraints and professional aims.

Usually, their mutual awareness of each other's procedures and styles — and the reasons for them — is very limited. Moreover, the insecurity of some of the agencies involved, and the stresses upon them, are likely to produce deeply-felt claims and counter-claims: 'We are the ones who know the kids'; 'We are the ones who have their real interests at heart'; 'We are the ones who are skilled/knowledgeable enough to help them'. In relation to the levels of intervention here, an ascending scale — a little more elaborate than that used earlier in this chapter — can usefully be distinguished:

(a) *Communication* — where no working patterns are changed, but efforts are made to help agencies to understand each other better. An example is the network in the South-East town described under Strategy D.

(b) *Co-operation* — where a number of different agencies co-operate on some (limited) joint task. An example might be compilation of a directory of local opportunities.

(c) *Co-ordination* — where a number of agencies alter their working patterns to bring them closely into line with one another, while remaining within their existing personal boundaries. An example is the harmonising of profiling procedures in Humberside, mentioned under Strategy D.

(d) *Cross-fertilisation* — where efforts are made to encourage agencies to share and exchange skills and in effect to work across professional boundaries in ways which eventually are likely to re-draw the boundaries themselves. An example is the formation of the cross-agency training team in Humberside described under Strategy D, and the inter-agency training recommendations of the Warnock Committee cited in relation to Strategy B.

(e) *Integration* — where the process in (d) is taken to a point where the boundaries between different agencies disappear altogether. This is relatively inconceivable in present circumstances, but was mentioned briefly as a possible outcome of the very close forms of working together to which Strategy C might lead.

Interventions at levels (a) can be implemented by practitioners, and at level (b) by agencies; at levels (c), (d) and (e), however, intervention normally seems to require initiatives, at the very least at local-authority level.

4.45 On the basis of this discussion, we would reformulate the desiderata for a Personal Guidance Base in these terms:

1. That each young person should be informed about the variety of agencies that are available to provide him/her with guidance in each of the three areas — vocational, educational, and personal.
 2. That each young person should have a 'key agency' to which to go when he/she wants help but is uncertain where to seek it.
 3. That this 'key agency' — which might vary between and even within different areas — should routinely follow up each young person at least twice a year between the ages of 16 and 18, to find out whether he/she wants any help, but accepting the answer 'no'.
 4. That efforts should be made to ensure that all guidance agencies are aware of the other's strengths and limitations, so as to facilitate referral.
 5. That efforts should also be made to encourage cross-agency 'co-operation', 'co-ordination', and 'cross-fertilisation' (in the senses defined above), not least because they will foster communication at a deeper level.
 6. That such efforts should include a focus on learning and progression, possibly leading — as the levels of 'co-ordination' and 'cross-fertilisation' — to the development of harmonised procedures and practices so as to ensure that this focus becomes a central feature of guidance provision, particularly for low achievers aged 16-18.
- In essence, this represents a 'merger' of Strategies B and D, into which initiatives of the kind envisaged in Strategy C can be incorporated in part but not in whole.

5 Implications for Colleges of Further Education

Implications for Colleges of Further Education

5.1 In this chapter we will consider the implications of the discussion in Chapter Four for FE colleges. First, we will explore the possible roles which colleges might play in relation to each of the four strategies described in that chapter, thus picking up the fifth feature of a Personal Guidance Base as envisaged by Levy (1980) — Further Education's special role. Second, we will examine how similar PGB strategies might be applied within FE colleges themselves. To avoid confusion, the former discussion will refer to the role of colleges in what we will call a 'Local PGB' — in other words, a PGB offering guidance to young people within a locality; the subsequent discussion will then refer to a 'College PGB' — in other words, a PGB offering guidance within a college for the college's students.

5.2 Before embarking, it is important to emphasise that reality is unlikely to be neatly pigeon-holed within the categories described in this chapter (or indeed in Chapter Four). Often what actually happens will blur the distinctions which underpin our discussions. The value of making these distinctions is, however, that it can enable policy-makers and others to clarify key policy issues relating to current provision and to identify possible directions for further development.

The Possible Roles of FE Colleges in a Local PGB

5.3 Chapter Four presented four ways in which allocation of responsibilities for guidance of low achievers aged 16-18 might be structured. We will examine the roles which Further Education might play in relation to each of them in turn.

5.4 In *Strategy A*, responsibility for guidance is allocated to a single agency which delivers guidance at a single location. If such responsibilities were given to an FE college, its role would be that of *sole provider*. We have already suggested in Chapter Four (para 4.8) that the statutory role of the Careers Service makes it impossible for FE colleges, or indeed any other agency, to claim such an exclusive role. The only conceivable application within current circumstances would be if FE colleges were made responsible for offering an 'Educational Guidance Base', alongside a separate 'Vocational Guidance

Base' run by the Careers Service, and (possibly) a 'Personal Guidance Base' (in a more narrow sense) run by the Youth and Community Service or some other agency. This would so institutionalise the boundaries between these three areas of guidance and support that it would be difficult to recognise the extent to which, in practice, they need to blur into one another if they are to be effective. Nonetheless, it is feasible to envisage an LEA deciding that FE colleges should have responsibility for offering all *educational* guidance within its boundaries, helping young people to focus on their learning needs and deciding where they can be met within the variety of learning opportunities available.

5.5 In the event, we have come across no LEA which has done this in a formal way. In some areas, though, efforts have been made to use MSC-sponsored Employment Induction Courses to provide a nascent base of this kind. As a lecturer in one such college told us:

'I saw it essentially in the beginning that it was a place all kids go to. If you were interested in YOP you could come and find out what best suited you and then have a go at it. It would take several goes to get it right, but what we were attempting was a period of purely diagnostic and assessment work before any placement.'

5.6 This has, though, run into difficulties. For one thing, some MSC staff — under pressure to fulfil the government's pledge to offer something within YOP to all unemployed young people — took the view that such three-week diagnostic courses need not be followed by a placement, since priority for placements should be awarded to youngsters who had so far had nothing. This is a telling reminder of what was said in Chapter Two about the way in which 'opportunity structures' can facilitate or impede progression.

5.7 But more important from the point-of-view of our present concerns was the strong feeling in the area that, since the FE college was itself an 'opportunity provider' in competition with other such providers, guidance on the subsequent placement should ultimately be based elsewhere — and preferably with the Careers Service, which had no vested interests of this kind. The FE lecturer herself felt that the

opportunities to explore options should be kept outside colleges, which might otherwise be tempted to place more emphasis on recruiting potential students to their own courses instead of providing neutral coverage of the full range of local provision. She also pointed out that local colleges frequently had a limited and inadequate understanding of the actual content of other options.

5.8 Much the same kind of objections could be made to the possible role of FE colleges in relation to *Strategy B*, where responsibility for ensuring the provision of guidance within the locality is allocated to a single agency, but the agency acts not only as a provider of guidance but also as a co-ordinator of guidance which may be offered by a variety of other agencies in a number of different locations. The possible role for FE colleges here would be to be the local co-ordinator. Again, though, such colleges' lack of perceived neutrality would seem to place them in a less favourable position than the Careers Service. Even if this issue is discounted, their lack of previous sustained contact with the young people concerned may be viewed as making them weaker candidates than the schools for such a co-ordinating role. If, however, all low achievers aged 16-18 did spend a diagnostic period at college, the argument in favour of the school might be weakened. (This would be especially the case in areas with tertiary colleges, where rivalries between school and college would not arise.)

5.9 It could also be argued that the possibilities for day-release to Further Education are not necessarily an *alternative* to other provision but are able to *supplement* it, and that, therefore, FE colleges are not necessarily in competition with other sectors. Certainly, in the college cited above, contact with the college through the Employment Induction Course seemed to have encouraged youngsters subsequently to come for day-release:

'You let them in to see a bit of college life, and a lot of kids on Employment Induction Courses were probably the kind of kid you wouldn't see normally get encouraged. They find that they like it. . . . One reason why our day-release programme is so full is that they've all been on three or 13-week courses in the college.'

5.10 Nonetheless, it is certainly the case that if FE colleges are to act as co-ordinators of guidance, they will have to prove that they can draw in more young people for day-release etc. than at present. In the Youth Opportunities Programme, for example, only 22% of trainees on the various work-experience programmes received off-the-job training in 1981, and of these only six in ten received it in FE colleges (Greaves, 1981). Only if these figures are massively increased are FE colleges likely to be able to sustain the continuing contact with low achievers aged 16-18 which is necessary to validate a co-ordinating role. The report of the MSC Youth Task Group (MSC, 1982) envisages that all participants in the Youth Training Scheme will receive a minimum of three months' off-the-job training and/or relevant further education within their one-year programme; the possibility of progression to skill training suggests that this could be extended. The report appears, however, to offer no direct encouragement to FE colleges to see themselves as managing agencies within YTS and therefore, potentially, as co-ordinators of local guidance provision.

5.11 Such a co-ordinating role would certainly require colleges to find out more about learning opportunities outside their own boundaries — on-the-job, for example (possibly drawing on the Tavistock Institute's 'Learning at Work' project). It would also require them to explore ways in which they could establish closer relationships than they have in most areas to date with the organisers of other schemes. These relationships would need to be based not only on what FE colleges could offer to schemes as off-the-job education and training providers, but also on the development of a kind of 'learning consultant' role along the lines envisaged by the FEU (1979a, chapter 6) and by Levy (1980); we have no evidence of any significant development of such a role in the colleges we have visited*. Finally, the co-ordinating role would require

*We have though been interested to hear from Eddy Knasel, one of our NICEC colleagues working on an MSC-sponsored project, that one of the potential spin-offs from FE colleges offering City and Guilds '926' courses for Instructor/Supervisors is that — because course tutors are obliged to visit a variety of YOP schemes to monitor the Supervisors' on-the-job 'practice' — they are put in a position to adopt a 'networking role' for the schemes within their catchment area, acquainting them with some of the responses that other local schemes have made to common problems.

FE colleges to establish much closer contacts with providers of guidance in the vocational and personal areas, where its own provision is likely to be weaker than it will be in the educational area.

5.12 In *Strategy C*, the responsibility for guidance is shared among a number of agencies, but they are brought together beneath one roof. Here the role of FE colleges could be to provide a *location*, where a number of agencies could be made available to young people. Already the Careers Service sometimes establishes a base within colleges: this could no doubt be extended further. At the 'YOP Unit' at North Lindsey Technical College in Humberside, for example, there are proposals to attach a Careers Officer to the unit for two-thirds of his/her time, and also to attach a Youth Worker on a full-time basis.

5.13 Such developments are likely to be of value to those young people already on Further Education courses. If, however, the notion were to be advanced of an FE college providing a location for a Local PGB for, in particular, all low achievers aged 16-18, questions would again need to be posed about whether the college is likely to be sufficiently accessible and attractive to all such young people who require help. Since many of these young people are not part of the traditional clientele of Further Education, and since most colleges are still exploring how far they can cater for their needs, it is likely that inhibitions would need to be overcome on both sides.

5.14 In *Strategy D*, both the responsibility for, and the delivery of, guidance are shared among a number of different agencies and locations. The role of FE colleges here is that of *partner*. They could also in principle take the initiative in attempts to achieve communication or co-ordination between these agencies and locations, but on the whole — as we saw in Chapter Four — the Careers Service or a separate LEA appointment would seem to provide a more 'neutral' base for such a 'network co-ordinator' role. Within such a network, a college could offer its knowledge of the range of opportunities stemming from its variety of educational courses. It could also offer any experience that it may have developed in using student profiles and other forms of assessment involving students themselves, as well as the wider

experience of articulating and responding to student problems gained in courses concerned with teaching social and life skills. In addition, as a partner in such a network, it could learn from the work of other partners: for instance, it could learn from the Careers Service's more intimate knowledge of local labour markets and its more formal training in interviewing skills; it could learn from the Youth and Community Service's understanding of the local youth scene and its more informal ways of working with young people; and it could learn much about the varying ways in which all the other participants in the network conceive of their role and purpose.

5.15 Further Education staff have, indeed, been major participants in sessions run by the Humberside counselling and guidance training team described in Chapter Four (paras 4.35-4.37), and the pressing needs of staff involved in 'voc. prep.' — largely from FE colleges, with some from schools — have made their concerns central to the team's work; the Careers Service and the Youth and Community Service have so far been seen largely as 'givers' rather than as 'receivers'. This has been further emphasised by the fact mentioned in para 4.36 that, because the team is an LEA initiative, it has not yet attempted to involve Supervisors and other staff from employers and from MSC-owned Community Projects and Training Workshops in its work. This highlights the difficulty of structuring networks so that they are firmly based on a partnership model and do not become 'colonised' by a particular group.

5.16 Nonetheless, on balance it would seem that of the four roles we have outlined for FE colleges — those of *sole provider*, of *co-ordinator*, of *location*, and of *partner* — that of *partner* is the most immediately feasible, leaving open the possibility of its developing some co-ordinating function (particularly in the educational guidance area), and of providing a location for other agencies where this seems appropriate. It is important also to recognise that any substantial move in the direction of the roles of co-ordinator or of location — or, of course, of sole provider — would require formal policy decisions to be taken outside FE colleges themselves, at LEA level at the very least, and with MSC involvement too. Developing the partnership role can more readily be undertaken by

colleges at their own initiative, alongside contacts with other agencies established in a more informal and organic way.

A College PGB?

5.17 Whatever its involvement in a Local PGB, an FE college has to determine how much attention guidance is to be given within its own structure, and how this guidance is to be provided. If it does not do this, any claims it may make at a Local PGB level are not likely to be taken seriously.

5.18 On the whole, guidance has not in the past been strongly developed within FE colleges (see eg. Marks, 1975). Most of their courses have been based on the requirements of particular occupations, and it has usually been assumed – sometimes quite falsely – that those entering the courses have already made a firm commitment to the occupation in question. Accordingly, the concepts both of *vocational* and of *educational* guidance, in the senses in which we have used them here, are not in general well-established within FE colleges. Many colleges have also run more academic courses (eg. for GCE examinations) but again the syllabuses have been predetermined – this time on 'academic' grounds – and on the whole the dominance of the vocational tradition has meant, paradoxically, that the vocational guidance offered to students on these courses has often been more limited than in schools. At the same time, the tradition that FE colleges offer a more 'adult' status to their students than do schools has meant that they have been more reluctant to set up the kind of *personal* guidance structure which most schools have established.

5.19 These sources of resistance to guidance have been under some pressure in recent years. There has been awareness that many students on vocational courses are not fully committed to the relevant occupation on entry, or lose their commitment during the course, or are forced by the lack of employment opportunities at the end to explore alternative options. There has also been awareness of the careers guidance needs of students on academic courses.* Finally, there has been a growth of tutorial structures and of counselling services, paralleling the growth of

such services in higher education and other post-school educational institutions. It has become widely recognised that such services do not necessarily imply paternalism, but rather can have an important contribution to make to the learning process.

5.20 These developments have, however, been constrained somewhat by the cellular structure of FE colleges. The traditional division of colleges into hierarchically-structured but largely autonomous departments has meant that the implementation of guidance has often been left to the discretion of senior management within each department. Unless there has been a strong consensus on the need for a college-wide policy on guidance, attempts to build such a policy have been able to be readily contained or even subverted. Even if a college has a common policy on paper, what happens in practice may vary widely from department to department. One of the effects of this is that such guidance as there is tends to be remedial rather than developmental in character. A remedial approach, designed to alleviate problems as they occur, offers fewer threats to departmental autonomy, and can more readily be distributed among a range of different groups and individuals without demanding too much effort to co-ordinate their overall impact. A developmental approach, on the other hand, requires more attention to be paid to the guidance role of tutors, and to co-ordinated planning of the organisational and training back-up required for such a role to be implemented effectively.

5.21 The development within FE colleges of 'voc. prep.' courses, and the entry of a new student clientele containing many more low achievers than FE colleges have been accustomed to, challenges many of these traditional structures and attitudes. Firstly, as we saw in Chapter One (paras 1.9-1.11) it means that – at least for these students – guidance moves from a peripheral to a central role in the educational process. Secondly, it begins to challenge the cellular nature of the FE college with its structure of

*New information on the development of careers guidance services within FE colleges should be available soon from a survey of 'Provision for Careers Guidance within Further Education', which has been carried out at the National Foundation for Educational Research under Margaret Reid and Sheila Stoney. The project was due to be completed by December 1982.

autonomous and discrete departments. Learning opportunities are frequently distributed across a range of departmental divisions, requiring some form of linkage and some method of monitoring the student's progress and how well his or her needs are being met.

5.22 Accordingly, the issues of colleges' responsiveness to the needs of low achievers on the one hand, and to guidance needs on the other, tend to become closely intertwined. The levels of responsiveness vary a great deal. Some colleges, and some departments within other colleges, have already developed a strong sympathy for both sets of needs; others are resistant, and become involved only reluctantly and without any enthusiasm or commitment. Among the forces for resistance are traditional views of the role of Further Education, and restricted views of the role of the FE teacher; others include a wish to make the future like the past, a lack of contact with the new clientele, and anxieties about the skills and expertise required to work with them within a guidance framework. On the other hand, forces for change include a recognition that the traditional student groups (eg. apprentices) are often declining, and the pressures of national and local policy initiatives; attempts to integrate the Youth Training Scheme with patterns of skill training (including apprenticeship) may be particularly important in this respect.

5.23 The balance between these forces varies a great deal, but in our experience the tensions between them exist in every college, and are likely to have a considerable impact on both the nature and effectiveness of the guidance policy within a college. In most colleges, work with low achievers has hitherto been kept separate from, and subordinate to, the mainstream provision for other, better-established groups, which is where power and resources have tended to be concentrated. The guidance needs of low achievers have thus had to compete against more powerful interests, and responsibility for them has tended to be left to particular groups of staff who have often had to work under great pressure, and with powerful interests, and responsibility for them has tended to be left to particular groups of staff who have often had to work under great pressure, and with limited resources and policy support from senior

management teams. There have, however, been exceptions to this, and certainly the issue of how far the 'new FE' is to be integrated with 'mainstream FE' (the very currency of these terms is itself significant) is a key issue for the future of Further Education. The attention attached to guidance — as a concept which at present is particularly central to the interests of low achievers, but is potentially relevant to all students within a college — may be of particular significance in this respect.

5.24 In principle, guidance can influence the whole relationship between the student and the college, from the point of entry, through the learning process, to the point of exit. Selection and induction can be conducted in a way which attends to the needs of the students as well as to the needs of the college. The learning process can permit continued negotiation about the extent to which the individual's needs are being met, and how they could be better provided for. And at the point of exit, the college can see its responsibility as extending beyond the award of a certificate to helping the student to decide where to go next — and how to get there.

5.25 All this raises the issue of how a Personal Guidance Base might best be constructed in a college for its own students. In discussing the concepts of a College PGB, we suggest that it might be useful to apply the same kind of analysis that we applied in Chapter Four to the concept of a Local PGB.

5.26 Thus, *Strategy A* in a College PGB would mean allocating responsibility for guidance to a single role. This might be a Student Counsellor or Adviser, to whom all students — including low achievers — would have access. Alternatively, all responsibility for guidance might be allocated to Course Tutors. In either case, the official limiting of guidance provision to a single role has an appealing administrative neatness. It makes it easy to make precise statements about the responsibility for guidance, and how it is to be met.

5.27 Such an approach is often, however, unrealistic, implying — if taken literally — an impossible workload. There is, for example, no way in which a Student Counsellor can know and be known by all the students in a college, let alone offer the full range of help they

need. Similarly, Course Tutors often have to fit in their guidance responsibilities within a considerable teaching commitment; they also not infrequently feel out of their depth in certain areas, and rarely have been offered any training in their tutorial role. The result can be to leave the individuals concerned feeling isolated and unsupported in a role which they find very demanding if they take it seriously. As one Course Tutor told us towards the end of our interview with her:

'I've enjoyed talking to you very much. It's something I've not been able to do. I'm isolated. I don't get a chance to bounce my ideas off people. We don't seem to have time.'

In many cases, the effect of all this is to create a growing gulf between theory and practice. The Course Tutor system, for example, can become confined to a weekly 'tutorial hour' in which the tutor routinely asks students if they 'have any problems', clearly inviting the answer 'no' — the hour is then used for private study.

5.28 *Strategy B* in a College PGB implies ensuring that each student is allocated to a Course Tutor who is seen not as a sole provider but as a co-ordinator of guidance, recognising that such guidance may be given by a range of different people. The stance of the Course Tutor shifts from 'I do the guidance work with my students' to 'I ensure that the students for whom I am responsible get good and effective guidance from the adults around them'. The role is now not to provide all the guidance, but to act as a first-in-line provider and as a referral point to a wide range of specialist back-up services, including the College Counsellor, the Careers Officer, or whoever seems appropriate and approachable. Again, however, if this is to be any more than a paper scheme, it requires that tutors have an opportunity to build sound relationships with these services, and to develop the appropriate diagnostic and referral skills.

5.29 The task of developing links with external agencies can — if taken seriously — be very demanding. Some students entering courses designed for low achievers will have had contact with statutory social-work agencies; some may still be under their official care. In such cases, the role of co-ordinating guidance provision is delicate and sensitive. There

needs to be time to gain the young person's trust, to establish a working rapport, and to explore which other adults are involved in his or her life. Where more than one professional agency is involved, it is important to recognise that students may be receiving different accounts of what their problem is and what should be done about it; conversely, they may be giving different accounts to different agencies, and even playing one off against another. At the 'YOP Unit' at Grimsby College of Further Education, special efforts have been made to establish close links with such agencies as the Careers Service, the Social Services Department, the Probation Service, and the Police; the closeness of liaison has even developed to the point where the Social Services Department routinely inform the YOP Unit within the college of changes in the stand-by duty officer. Such close liaison is, however, rare.

5.30 Even in terms of education and training opportunities, there can be difficulties in 'tracking' students on vocational preparation courses. The sheer range of teachers, tutors and supervisors working with such groups within the college and in work-experience placements etc. can be considerable, and can make it difficult to monitor student progress. Adequate time has to be provided for liaison, and for making visits to placements.

5.31 Within 'voc. prep.', there is indeed an argument for developing the co-ordinating role into a full-time post. At Abraham Moss College in Manchester, for example, a 'Personal Guidance Tutor' is being appointed to be responsible for providing a guidance service to young people on vocational preparation courses. The tutor is expected not only to be responsible for counselling students and for producing profile records in negotiation with them, but also co-ordinating the help provided by individual tutors, establishing links with the Careers Service and other appropriate agencies, and working with the College Counsellor on welfare matters.

5.32 In *Strategy C*, responsibility for offering guidance to low achievers is vested not in a single role but in a single location. In some colleges, work with low achievers aged 16-18 has been identified as a special form of provision separated from the rest of the college's work and physically located in a separate

building or area. The location of 'opportunity provision' there implies that 'guidance provision' is located there too, though a variety of staff from different backgrounds may be involved in providing it. This is particularly true if the relevance of guidance skills to the teaching/learning process is recognised and supported (see Miller, 1982).

5.33 The danger with such 'YOP Units' (as they are often termed) is that they segregate low achievers from the mainstream of the college, and create a 'ghetto effect', especially where they are housed in inferior conditions. This can be mutually impoverishing: low achievers are denied access to opportunities and guidance resources in other parts of the college, and the college is unable to explore the implications for its mainstream provision of the approaches being developed for the low achievers.

5.34 On the other hand, such units offer students an identifiable and accessible base for guidance and support, which ensures that a continuity of concern can be maintained during periods when students are away on the various elements of their course, eg. on work-experience placements. It also means that students have a variety of adults from whom they can choose whom to approach. It thus makes it possible to avoid the rigidity of allocating students to a tutor with whom they may have little affinity. This leaves open the danger that everyone believes that someone else is dealing with a problem and leaves it alone; it also makes it possible for some students to play one adult off against another. It is accordingly vital, where responsibility for guidance is distributed across a team within a location, that time is made available for team members to meet, to share information, and to discuss matters of common concern. If this is done, a team approach can be developed which enables tasks to be allocated to those with relevant interests and skills, and also for skills gradually to be shared. Those with particular areas of expertise – in counselling, for example – can make use of their expertise on behalf of the team, and make that expertise available to the team as a whole. The result can be – if there is sufficient trust – the building of shared skills and mutual exchange.

5.35 A further argument in favour of 'YOP Units' was

put to us by a tutor who worked in such a unit and had initially viewed it with some misgivings. He had come round to favouring it, and particularly stressed the advantage in generating staff commitment. In his view, the 'mainstream' of the college simply lacked the commitment required to provide the kind of support which some of the students needed:

'Integrating them into the main college doesn't work. They need a different kind of approach than most of the college are used to.'

He illustrated the commitment required:

'I want my staff to do the counselling everyone says is so important, but can't do it because it's not counted as class-contact hours. . . . There's all kinds of times when trainees need counselling and follow-up but that the present structure doesn't allow for. We have to do the best we can.'

In this unit, staff met every Friday afternoon for a case-conference; this included part-time staff, some of whom came in their own free-time. All staff also gave up an evening for a monthly staff meeting, because there was no time for it during working hours. Even with the group support provided by the unit, he wondered how long this commitment could be sustained:

'It's what will happen in two to three years' time when you have the less enthusiastic teacher coming into the unit, and the novelty has lost its appeal. People won't stay this committed then, if you ask me. They're relying on a lot of people's goodwill at the moment.'

5.36 In *Strategy D*, responsibility for guidance is shared between a variety of individuals in different parts of the college. Again, efforts need to be made to ensure that each person is aware of their particular guidance role and encouraged to collaborate with other members of the network of guidance provision. This can help to break down the 'conspiracy of silence' which often exists within colleges, with tutors being unwilling to admit their anxieties and limitations for fear that they will be regarded as failures. It also means that the concept of guidance can start to spread across the college, instead of being confined – as in *Strategy C* – to a particular part of it.

5.37 As with the Local PGB, contacts may be at a

number of levels. They may be concerned basically with *communication*, with those with a guidance role or responsibility meeting periodically to exchange news and ideas. Or they may involve *co-operation* on some joint task – the design of a profiling form, for example. Or they may extend to more general *co-ordination* of procedures – eg. for record-keeping etc. Or they may seek to encourage deeper *cross-fertilisation* through joint training events.

5.38 Such work will probably require a 'network co-ordinator' if it is to be effective. The task of the co-ordinator in this case is not – as in Strategy B – to co-ordinate the guidance for particular students, but rather to co-ordinate the administrative steps through which collaboration can be encouraged among the guidance providers. This task might be allocated to a College Counsellor, to a Vice-Principal, or – in relation to low achievers – to the posts which some colleges have created of Head of Vocational Preparation or of Personal Guidance Tutor (see later discussion in para 6.29). Meanwhile, the responsibility for 'pulling it all together' is, in effect, left to the student him/herself – which is where, as we argued in Chapter Three (para 3.24), it ultimately *should* lie.

5.39 As with our discussion of the Local PGB towards the end of Chapter Four, we would suggest that of these strategies, Strategies B, C and D – or some adapted/merged version of them – seem most likely to achieve the aims of a Personal Guidance Base as envisaged by Levy (1980). Once again, the choice seems basically to revolve around the relative importance attached to the criteria of centralising guidance provision in a specific *location* (strongest in Strategy C), of maintaining *continuity* of guidance provision for individual students (strongest) in Strategy B and also, in this case, in Strategy C, and of *collaboration* between different guidance providers (most broadly-based in Strategy D).

5.40 We also consider that the desiderata outlined in para 4.45 are as applicable to a College PGB as to a Local PGB. We accordingly repeat them in an appropriately modified form here:

1. That each student should be informed about the variety of people that are available inside and outside the college to provide him/her with guidance in each of

the three areas – vocational, educational, and personal.

2. That each student should have a 'key person' to whom to go when he/she wants help but is uncertain where to seek it.

3. That this 'key person' should routinely follow up each student at regular intervals (at least once a term), to find out whether he/she wants any help, but accepting the answer 'no'.

4. That efforts should be made to ensure that all the adults involved in offering guidance in and around the college are aware of each other's strengths and limitations, so as to facilitate referral.

5. That efforts should be made to encourage 'co-operation', 'co-ordination', and 'cross-fertilisation' between adults involved in offering guidance in and around the college, not least because this will foster communication at a deeper level.

6. That such efforts should include a focus on negotiation, reviewing, and progression in learning, possibly leading – at the levels of 'co-ordination' and 'cross-fertilisation' – to the development of harmonised procedures and practices so as to ensure that these become central features of curriculum development within the college.

Our belief is that a college which meets these desiderata in relation to a College PGB will be more ready to play a full part in the organisation of a Local PGB in its locality.

6 Reflections on the Processes of Change

Reflections on the Processes of Change

6.1 In this final chapter we reflect on the processes of change required to implement some of the changes outlined in the earlier chapters of the report. In doing so, we draw especially on the experience of the consultancy phase of the project. The aim of this phase was to seek to use the learning from the research phase to influence developments in particular colleges or areas. It thus involved project team members in moving from the role of 'researcher' to the role of 'consultant'. It also involved colleges etc. moving from being simple *providers* of data to being willing to own the data and to demonstrate or develop a *readiness for change*.

6.2 The strategy of combining research and development elements within the same project was an attractive one, and it proved fruitful, both in terms of its impact on a number of colleges and – less expectedly – in terms of extending the learning yield from the project. Not the least of the additional learning stemmed from the difficulties posed by the strategy itself. In the first part of this final chapter we will focus on some of these difficulties, in the expectation that this will be of value to others involved in working in change-agent roles either internally within Further Education – whether in policy-making or staff-development roles – or externally as advisors or consultants. We will then discuss further three issues underpinning some of the discussions in the earlier chapters – namely, the dynamics of change, the concept of 'networking', and the concept of 'co-ordination' – all of which have been illuminated further by our consultancy work.

Working for Change: Learning from a Consultancy Approach

6.3 It is important to clarify the form of consultancy which the project team felt it appropriate to offer. The traditional view of the consultant's role, illustrated by the medical model, is that of a technical expert, whose technical skill and knowledge considerably exceeds that of the people with whom he or she is working. The clients expect the consultant to perform a skilled diagnosis of the problem presented, and to design a solution. This model can work satisfactorily when the problem is a technical one, but does not translate

readily to problems centred on human relationships. In this case it is often more appropriate to adopt an approach which asserts that the people involved in the situation are the best judges of the appropriate solution: only they can know the complexity of the problem, and since they have both to implement and to live with whatever solution is devised, it is important that they feel a sense of ownership of it. Human problems within groups and organisations may look and feel very different to the various members of the group or organisation. The consultant accordingly needs to offer a form of help based in the main not on diagnosis and prescription, but on a process through which he or she elicits, clarifies, and feeds back for comment and further clarification, the issues raised by those consulted. The aim is for the clients to take responsibility for the essence of the work. This does not necessarily preclude the consultant taking a more interventionist stance by offering suggestions etc; the decision as to how far to do this depends on the consultant's view of the organisation's norms and of its appropriateness within the overall aim. This model of consultancy shares a similar value stance with that of guidance as defined in this report (see Chapter Three) – concern to foster autonomy, respect for participants' views, trust and confidentiality. It, therefore, seemed particularly appropriate within the present project.

6.4 We experienced some difficulties in making the transition from a 'research' to a 'consultant' role, and we would like briefly to offer this experience – and the more general problems posed by the consultant role – as part of the learning from the project. We will do so through three examples.

6.5 In Example 1, the antecedents of the situation in which the project worker eventually finds himself are complex; he has been and is a researcher in the eyes of the team members, but he has also illustrated his training competence. Thus, he is going to be a 'good catch' for the training team. But in what role? The group asks to use him, apparently not to learn about the process of course design, so much as to use the product of his expertise. In retrospect, it would have been better to have clarified and worked on this request so that the group could more clearly have understood his role. To do so might, however, have

Example 1

The project has a long 'research' phase gathering information in a particular area from all the main agencies offering guidance to low achievers aged 16-18. In due course, in response to requests, a lecture outlining some of the learning from this phase is given to a large group of college principals and heads of department, and a short experimental course on 'The Role of the Tutor' is run.

A multi-agency team is then set up in the area to explore the needs of staff from various agencies for training in the guidance and counselling area — a clear sign of a move towards a Personal Guidance Base focused on Strategy D. The project worker is invited to work with this team, an invitation which he gladly accepts as being closely in line with the aims of the project's development phase. His role in relation to the team is not, however, made clear: is he their 'tame trainer'? Is he a training consultant? 'Perhaps you would design the next course and we can discuss it at our next meeting?' asks the chairman. The project worker eventually agrees to do this in the hope that he will then gradually be able to encourage the team to take responsibility for its own course-design work. At subsequent meetings, however, they constantly talk about the *need* for such further work to be done, rather than getting down to the task of *doing* it.

been seen as holding back from releasing the 'product' of the research work. The project worker now becomes part of the dynamics of the team's work, providing a focus for its anxieties about its task and about how competent it is to achieve it. If he were able to take our preferred consultant stance, he would be able to use this as a way of helping the group to work through its anxieties, but this is made difficult by the group's need to hold on to his earlier identities as a researcher and a trainer. In the event, the project

worker became involved in a number of meetings, courses and workshops aimed at developing the competence of a multi-agency team in organising and running workshops in its own right. The working contacts made here have continued beyond the end of the project.

Example 2

The project has early dealings with a college that 'knows' about the development phase and is only really interested in that phase of the project.

Towards the end of the project, the principal of the college expresses concern at the guidance provision: 'I haven't done anything about it up to now, but something must be done — we are ready now!' The project team move into high gear; it has been given a chance to influence the college's development.

When the project team enters the college, it finds that the College Counsellor, Careers Adviser and other support staff had put forward proposals for improving guidance practice some six months previously. They received no formal response: only the comment that a team from NICEC was going to come in and 'see what is needed'.

5.6 The tendency for consultancy work to be seen in terms of product rather than process is also illustrated in Example 2, where the College Principal clearly sees the team as offering technical expertise, whereas the team sees its expertise as lying in gathering information from concerned and interested parties, and then helping these parties to work on the information they have provided. The team, in other words, wants to work within a guidance/consultation/organisational-development value-stance of openness, trust and equality of worth, whereas the college wants to work within a hierarchical framework and on a 'need to know' basis. The team's excitement at the opportunity for influencing change on a major scale can pose difficult dilemmas: does it work to the ground-rules of the organisation, or does it maintain its

values? If the latter, it risks being rejected at the outset as not offering anything of perceived worth; if the former, it risks not providing the solutions which some or all of the participants consider appropriate, and subsequently being scapegoated if things go wrong (which they are almost bound to do if the participants do not want to make a recommended course of action work). In the event, the team undertook a fair amount of data-gathering and put forward 'suggestions' for the next steps to be taken; it thereby sought to meet the college norms half-way.

Example 3

The project has early dealings on a small but regular basis with a team of tutor-support staff in the college. The project team-member is invited in to act as a consultant to the group, not for technical expertise but to focus and report on the group's underlying dynamics and processes.

The group — an embryo Personal Guidance Base, since it is inter-agency in membership — meets for over a year before expanding to include tutors from departments throughout the college.

6.7 Example 3 serves to illustrate a further issue to be considered in development work. It is often on a small scale, invisible to the institution as a whole, and developing slowly and steadily rather than in leaps and bounds. Working across agencies requires, as has already been emphasised, considerable sensitivity and trust, and building trust requires time. If the hope, say, from a project sponsor or college management is to see major visible achievements, development work through this form of 'formative' consultancy can seem disappointing. Yet, too much pressure for success can itself imperil the developments that are taking place, which at first are fragile but can — if sustained — become developments of enduring value.

6.8 This discussion is included here because the potential value of educational consultants has been stressed in other FEU documents (notably Bazalgette, 1981), and is relevant to the work of advisers,

inspectors and development officers. The potential benefits from such a role are great, but the difficulties in achieving the benefits in practice are also considerable, not least in the variety of expectations of the consultant held by the institution. Few FE colleges in our experience know enough of the processes through which consultants work to know how best to use them; few consultants have had enough experience in consulting in educational settings (as opposed to advising, inspecting, etc.) to be able to work comfortably within this role in such settings.

6.9 Among important issues that need, from our experience, to be borne in mind in consultancy work are:

- (a) *Negotiation and access* — at what level is entry to the institution negotiated? (Principal? Head of Vocational Preparation? Counsellor? students?), and what implications is this likely to have for access to other parts of the organisation?
- (b) *Confidentiality* — what ethical constraints are to be imposed on the material generated?
- (c) *Expectations* — what role is the developer expected to play, and does this match his or her expectations of his or her role?
- (d) *Task* — is it manageable? will it involve a high-visibility, whole-institution focus, or a low-visibility, part-institution focus?

All these issues are, we feel, valuable to explore further in the context of achieving change in learning settings, in and between institutions. We commend their study to future workers in the field, especially in relation to the cross-boundary development work that will be needed to develop Personal Guidance Bases.

The Dynamics of Change

6.10 One of the themes that our development work brought to our attention even more strongly than the research phase of our project was the dynamics that are touched by the concept of a Personal Guidance Base. In late 1979, when the project was conceived, the Youth Opportunities Programme was still in its early days, and in relation to youth unemployment a sense of 'it's only a temporary problem' still held considerable sway in public and professional opinion. By mid-1982, as the project drew to its end, the

realisation is increasingly dawning that major structural changes are taking place in the labour market for young people and in the social institutions through which young people make the transition to adulthood. Most young people are henceforth unlikely to enter the labour market until the age of at least 17 and in many cases 18, and the successor to YOP (and UVP) – the Youth Training Scheme – seems likely to be established in a more enduring form, with all the trappings of institutionalisation that this is likely to involve.

6.11 It is within this changing context that the project has been working. The consequences of the change have been salutary to observe and be part of – feelings of anxiety, panic, anger and frustration are by no means uncommon in the adults working on schemes and in colleges. As one FE lecturer put it to us:

'Look, I've been working in this area for four years now and I think I've begun to learn something about the way I can work with these youngsters. Now the thing is going to get so big. Staff are going to come – staff who have shown no interest at all up to now . . .'

This feeling of resentment is understandable: the institutionalisation of an essentially experimental programme, which is one way of explaining the transition from YOP to YTS, is a process in which people who have been working in the experiment can both feel validated for a job well done, and yet threatened and 'swamped' by people and developments which seem to be 'taking over' what they have created.

6.12 Our work has brought us into contact with a wide range of staff who work with low achievers aged 16-18 and with others who work within YOP generally: FE staff, Careers Officers, Youth Workers, Supervisors, and so on. Our experience is that the question 'Where next for me?' is at present a powerful and, for many, a frustrating one. Such a question can, of course, be answered by a statement implying that it is 'where next' for the young people that is of primary importance. This is too glib. If adult workers on such schemes are over-anxious, then unless they can find mechanisms for working with such feelings, they are only likely to aggravate, and be aggravated by, similar

feelings in the young people with whom they work. Any system that makes significantly increased demands on its staff without offering support for them is likely to have difficulties in achieving the flexible strategies that seem to be the essence of the aim of the new initiatives.

6.13 This leads to another feature of our work with adult staff in the variety of agencies with which we have been in contact – the ambivalent attitude toward the concept of structure. Up to now, people working within special units in FE colleges, WEEP schemes, Community Projects, and so on, have had a great deal of flexibility and freedom to develop their work in their own way: the system of which they have been part has seemed reasonably remote. The Youth Training Scheme, with its emphasis on progression, assessment, standards and so on, appears for many to seem an imposition on that flexibility and freedom.

6.14 People in systems need structures within which to work, but they want flexible structures. Yet, flexibility implies an openness to change, and people are usually resistant to change because of the painful anxiety it generates. This 'double bind' is powerfully evident in the 'voc. prep.' system at present, and it is with people's experience of this 'double bind' that the project has been working. The notion of a Personal Guidance Base implies a structure, and each of the four strategies we have explored needs a structure for its successful implementation. The structures required, however, need to be flexible enough to build on the skills, experience and expertise present in a local area or in a college. Each of the strategies implies different kinds of structure and different degrees of flexibility – Strategy D being perhaps the most flexible – but efforts to implement any of the strategies will have to work with some of the dynamics outlined briefly above.

6.15 Coping with change is a big enough problem for a single agency, but a key element of the concept of a Personal Guidance Base is the focus on inter-agency collaboration. Where each agency is engaged not only in coping with its own response to change but also in working across its boundary with other agencies, the problems multiply. When in one area it was suggested that a Careers Officer be stationed permanently at a YOP Unit within a FE college, the suggestion was

refused on the grounds that 'They will lose access to information and colleagues'. When the point was pushed, the retort was: 'We're not all going to become Youth Workers'. This illustrates how threatening such an inter-agency approach can appear, and how sensitively it needs to be pursued.

Networking

6.16 We now turn to the two other issues, arising from earlier chapters of this report, which we would like to comment upon further in the light of our consultancy work. The first is networking. In Chapters Four and Five we have emphasised the importance of inter-agency collaboration in relation to Strategies B, C, and D, and have referred repeatedly to networks as a form of organisation which has much to offer in relation to such collaboration. There has been increasing interest in the idea of networking over the last few years, although there is still much confusion as to its nature and purpose. Our development work has illuminated some of its features and its advantages and risks, and it may be helpful to offer a few reflections here.

6.17 The concept of a helping network is not new. In the therapeutic field it has an established history, referring to the involvement of a number of participants in a common task (treatment of a particular client or client group) in a way that transcends the usual hierarchical structure of such organisations. Such a network would be co-ordinated by the most appropriate rather than necessarily the most senior person.

6.18 The other use of the term seems to derive from media usage. Here the concept applies to keeping large numbers of people 'in touch' with each other, perhaps through the supportive exchange of information or through occasional meetings.

6.19 Thus, the term can be seen to have two distinguishable applications in relation to the concept of a Personal Guidance Base:

(a) A helping network of people around a particular student – for example, the involvement of Course Tutor, Counsellor, Supervisor, and Careers Officer in working with the student to map out the type of

experience that would best meet the student's needs. This definition borrows the therapeutic model and translates it to the management of learning, a translation not unfamiliar in the educational world (some approaches to counselling and life skills can be seen to have been translated in similar ways).

(b) A helping network of people who are generally involved in guidance work with students from a variety of settings, and who might regularly keep in touch, share information and approaches, work together on shared tasks, and generally support each other, whether or not they are working with the same students. This definition borrows the media model.

6.20 The potential advantages of networking in terms of guidance appear to be at least four-fold:

(i) A network is a fairly loose form of organisation that does not follow formal organisational rules and regulations. This is particularly important where inter-agency collaboration is required, since each institution will already have existing rules, and to impose an additional set at the outset could be counter-productive in terms of motivation.

(ii) Each of the members retains their professional identity: they remain first and foremost in their usual work-role, and are only secondly a member of the network. This means that each member can share in the common tasks without giving up 'sovereignty'.

(iii) Each member can participate on the basis of 'relevance' rather than of duty: if they do not consider it useful to be at a meeting or event, then their absence is accepted, and the implications usual in more hierarchical organisations are minimised (though not necessarily absent altogether).

(iv) The co-ordination of such a network can be performed by the most relevant rather than the most senior person, and can, indeed, be encouraged to change from time to time.

6.21 It would, however, be wrong to suggest that networks are the answer to all the complex problems of inter-agency collaboration. Just as there are potential advantages, so there are risks:

(i) Learning to recognise and respond to other people's experience and expertise without recourse to hierarchical comparisons is easier said than done. Participants in networks spend most of their time in more hierarchical and formal organisations, and are

bound to bring some attitudes from such organisations into the network with them. To a Senior Lecturer in an FE college, a basic-grade Careers Officer may not seem 'in the same league'.

(ii) Co-ordinating a loose form of organisation can be an uncomfortable business – each member does not necessarily attach the same level of importance to membership. The fluidity and flexibility of a network gives each member the right not to turn up, and other members – including the co-ordinator – have to accept and understand this, without dwelling unduly on 'Why isn't he/she here?'

(iii) Time is needed to explore and share the assumptions and values that different members bring to the work of the network. If this is not done, the work is likely to be performed in a mediocre way, and indeed the network may never come to terms with its main tasks.

(iv) The network – particularly when based on the therapeutic model – can take on the nature of a spider's web entrapping the student/trainee, rather than a loose federation which makes more harmonised support accessible to the student/trainee.

(v) The network can be so loose that it is not even visible to its members. It may, for example, be used to describe the simple sending of a periodic newsletter to groups of people – in this case the term is being used as a vague way of describing a mailing list.

6.22 It is nonetheless our conclusion from the project that there is much potential in the concept of networking for the development of a Personal Guidance Base. At the student/trainee level, it can ensure that all the guidance personnel are involved in the process of choice and decision; while at the institutional level it can ensure that formal helpers are in touch with each other, recognising mutual strengths and working on common tasks. It also seems to have the potential to minimise the hierarchical divisions that can often destroy ideas such as a Personal Guidance Base before they have been given any chance to develop.

Co-ordination

6.23 One of the key issues that has to be resolved in any network is that of co-ordination. Like 'networking',

'co-ordination' can be used as a vague term: it can be a thinly veiled form of direction. As we understand the term, however, it implies a pulling together of a variety of helpers and a recognition of the value of each, without any sanctions in the form of coercive power. Within an inter-agency approach, where no one agency has control over the work of a Personal Guidance Base, co-ordination is likely to be the most that can be offered in terms of organisational control.

6.24 Existing structures in most institutions do not tend to validate the concept of co-ordination: instead they tend to stress direction through a hierarchical structure. Some colleges, however, are beginning to adopt a non-departmental management structure which has the advantage of reducing the levels of hierarchy and bringing the authority to make decisions nearer to the grass-roots practitioner. In this setting, co-ordination seems to have more chance of success, and indeed, is more likely to be familiar to the members of the institution.

6.25 It is easier to identify the tasks that a co-ordinator has to perform than to identify the person who needs to perform them. The tasks have been identified in earlier parts of the report, but are worth re-iterating here:

- (a) To ensure that links are established and maintained between all those who are 'formally' involved with the provision of guidance to individual students and to students generally (both within the college and across college/locality boundaries).
- (b) To ensure that guidance is offered to students at appropriate times and by the most appropriate person. In other words, the role of co-ordinator is to make sure that guidance provision is available, but not necessarily to provide it him/herself.
- (c) To ensure that those involved in the provision of guidance to students receive adequate support. Such support is likely to include training, and also resources in the form of time and appropriate facilities (see Miller, 1982, section 8.).
- (d) To ensure that the provision of guidance for students receives due attention at a policy level inside the college and within the locality.

6.26 The people who perform these tasks need to possess special expertise. Such people need to know

a fair amount about the nature of guidance and to have the ability to apply this understanding to a variety of different settings. They need to be able to command respect from other guidance practitioners rather than to be simply senior to them; in other words, their authority needs to stem from what French and Raven (1953) term 'legitimate' and 'referent' power, since the nature of co-ordination excludes the use of 'coercive' or 'reward' power.

6.27 The essential question is that of 'who co-ordinates?' Who is to be responsible for co-ordinating a network of guidance agents:

- (a) to a particular student?
- (b) in general — inside a college?
 - within a locality?

6.28 At the *student* level, it has been suggested earlier in the report that in the end, the student him/herself must be seen as the person who has to 'pull it all together'. Someone else, however, may be needed to make sure 'it' happens. This suggests that a distinction needs to be drawn between the student as the *integrator* of experience, including guidance, and an appointed adult as *co-ordinator* of experience, including access to guidance.* At this level, such co-ordinators will often be Course Tutors, Supervisors, or other first-in-line guidance agents.

6.29 At the *college* level, the co-ordination of guidance provision could be structured in a number of different ways. It could, for example, be an extension of the role of the College Counsellor or some other guidance specialist. This may be appropriate in some cases, but not in others. Many Counsellors perform their most valid and useful work by using their counselling skills in working with individuals or groups of students. Co-ordination requires organisation skills, which not all Counsellors will have, and which some may feel are incompatible with their essentially 'private' counselling roles. Moreover, inviting Counsellors to play a co-ordinating role could in some colleges lead to accusations of 'empire-building', and to consequent resistance. Alternatives are to attach the guidance-co-ordination role to a senior administrative post within

the college — a Vice-Principal, for example — or to make a special appointment at Senior Lecturer or above; if the task is limited in the first instance mainly to low achievers, these alternative approaches could be implemented by attaching the role to the post of Head of Vocational Preparation, or by appointing a Personal Guidance Tutor. Certainly the 'Co-ordinator of Guidance' — whether a full-time post or a role attached to an existing post, and whether limited mainly to low achievers or not — needs to have a perceived neutrality if he or she is to perform the function effectively, and to have access to all departments and all levels of the college hierarchy. The decision as to who is best placed to perform such a role is one for the individual college to make, but we believe it is a crucial role requiring much skill, and we would commend colleges to take great care in making such an appointment.

6.30 At the *local* level, similar arguments apply. The co-ordinator will have to be able to be regarded with respect by a variety of agencies, and to be perceived as reasonably neutral. It could be argued that the obvious person to fulfil this role is the Principal Careers Officer, as the Careers Service has both the necessary guidance skills and the neutrality. Again, our experience suggests that this suggestion may be appropriate in some areas, but not in others. The Careers Service has high levels of expertise in relation to placement, knowledge of the local labour market, etc., but often cannot claim similar expertise in relation to profiling, course design, etc. Each local area will need to make its own decision about the most appropriate person or agency to perform the co-ordinating role; in some cases, indeed, it might rotate between a number of people or agencies, perhaps under the aegis of an LEA sub-committee on FE/Careers, or of local liaison groups like Youth Opportunities Councils where these exist. The role is similar to that of the college co-ordinator, save that at this level the co-ordinator is likely to focus more on 'co-ordinating the co-ordinators' from a variety of agencies rather than on co-ordinating practitioners.

Conclusion

6.31 This chapter has attempted to explore some of

*We acknowledge our debt to Kathryn Evans, Director of the Careers Guidance Integration Project (also based at NICE), for identifying and illuminating this distinction.

the elements of the process of change that emerged during the project and that are likely to need to be tackled in attempts to develop a Personal Guidance Base. In our view, many more colleges and local areas are ready to consider such a development now than was the case when the project started in 1980. We hope that this document will provide a resource through which each area and college will be able to make their provision fit their local needs.

Summary

This summary is designed to provide a brief review of the major topics in the main body of the report. It is hoped that this will help those who have had time to read the full report to 'pull the bits together', and those who have not yet read it to identify the sections they may particularly want to refer to.

The Context

The range of opportunities for young people in the 16-18 age-range in general, and for low achievers in particular, is changing rapidly (paras 1.1-1.8; 2.1-2.11). The rise in youth unemployment has severely reduced employment opportunities, but has resulted in the development of new programmes, some of which have been focussed around the broad learning needs of young people in making the transition to adult and working life.

One result of these developments has been to focus more attention on the guidance services available to such young people (paras 1.9-1.11; 2.12-2.18; Chapter Three) as a means of mediating between individuals' needs and the opportunities open to them. Such services can be based either on a 'restricted' model of guidance, helping young people to choose from a range of pre-packaged options, or on an 'extended' model, in which guidance is seen as an interactive process through which individual needs and opportunity provision can be brought into harmony (paras 2.14-2.18). These models of 'educational guidance', focussed around the concept of learning, also need to be related to needs for 'personal guidance' and for 'vocational guidance' (paras 1.9-1.10; 3.13-3.14).

Guidance is offered to young people by a wide variety of agencies and individuals, including 'specialist providers' (eg. Careers Officers, Student Counsellors, Social Workers), 'first-in-line providers' (eg. Course and Subject Tutors, Work Supervisors, Youth and Community Workers), and 'informal providers' (eg. parents, friends) (paras 3.15-3.25). This diversity can enrich the range of information and help on which young people can draw. But, it can also at times be a source of confusion, duplication and competition, not least in the 'educational-guidance' area of learning focussed around preparation for adult and working life. It was to harmonise the structure of such guidance provision, and to ensure that young

people needing help do not 'fall through the net', that the concept of a Personal Guidance Base was evolved.

The Concept

Five features of the PGB concept as developed by Levy (1980) can be distinguished (paras 1.13-1.20):

- (a) *Location* – a place which young people can visit as and when they need help.
 - (b) *Continuity* – guidance to continue to be available before, during and after opportunities and placements.
 - (c) *Learning and progression* – a focus on assisting progressive learning, particularly related to the transition to adult and working life.
 - (d) *Inter-agency collaboration* – encouraging closer working links between the various agencies involved in offering guidance.
 - (e) *Further Education's special role* – FE to have a particular role in the educational-guidance area.
- The main body of the report has aimed to explore these criteria, to investigate and clarify the concepts involved, and to relate them to current experiments in practice.

Possible Models for the Development of a PGB

There are some tensions between the various features of a PGB as outlined above. In particular, different models for the development of a PGB within a locality can be identified, according to the stance taken on two issues:

- (a) Whether the basic *responsibility* for ensuring the provision of guidance is allocated to a single providing agency or shared between several.
- (b) Whether the *delivery* of guidance for any given individual is organised to take place at a single location or at several.

This produces four possible strategies:

	Agency	Location
Strategy A	Single	Single
Strategy B	Single	Multi
Strategy C	Multi	Single
Strategy D	Multi	Multi

Chapter Four explored each of these strategies in turn, relating them to examples of practice in Britain and elsewhere, and examining the extent to which they meet the first four of the PGB criteria. It was concluded that while each of the strategies meets some of the criteria, Strategy A is the least satisfactory; the choice between Strategies B-D depends on the primacy attached to the criteria of *location* (strongest in Strategy C), of *continuity* (strongest in Strategy B), and of *inter-agency collaboration* (strongest in Strategy D) (para 4.39).

The criteria were reviewed critically in the light of this discussion (paras 4.40-4.44), and the desiderata for a PGB reformulated (para 4.45) as follows:

1. That each young person should be informed about the variety of agencies that are available to provide him/her with guidance in each of the three areas – vocational, educational, and personal.
2. That each young person should have a 'key agency' to which to go when he/she wants help but is uncertain where to seek it.
3. That this 'key agency' – which might vary between and even within different agencies – should routinely follow up each young person at least twice a year between the ages of 16 and 18, to find out whether he/she wants any help, but accepting the answer 'no'.
4. That efforts should be made to ensure that all guidance agencies are aware of the other's strengths and limitations, so as to facilitate referral.
5. That efforts should also be made to encourage cross-agency 'co-operation', 'co-ordination', and 'cross-fertilisation' (in the senses defined in para 4.44), not least because they will foster communications at a deeper level.
6. That such efforts should include a focus on learning and progression, possibly leading – at the levels of 'co-ordination' and 'cross-fertilisation' – to the development of harmonised procedures and practices so as to ensure that this focus becomes a central feature of guidance provision, particularly for low achievers aged 16-18.

In essence, this represents a 'merger' of Strategies B and D, into which initiatives of the kind envisaged in Strategy C can be incorporated as part but not as whole.

Implications for Further Education

Each of the strategies opens up different roles for FE colleges in a Local PGB. In Strategy A, they could act as the *sole provider* of educational guidance; in Strategy B, as the local *co-ordinator* of guidance; in Strategy C, as a *location* for guidance offered by a number of agencies; and in Strategy D, as a *partner* within a network of different agencies and locations. The first half of Chapter Five (paras. 5.3-5.16) examined these possible roles in relation to examples of practice involving particular colleges, and concluded that the role of *partner* is the most immediately feasible, leaving open the possibility of developing some co-ordinating function (particularly in the educational-guidance area) and of providing a location for other agencies where this seems appropriate.

Whatever its role in a Local PGB, a FE college has to determine how much attention guidance is to be given within its own structure, and how this guidance is to be provided. If it does not do this, any claims it may make at a Local PGB level are not likely to be taken seriously. The second half of Chapter Five (paras 5.17-5.39) accordingly examined how the PGB strategies might be applied within a college for its own students – ie. within the concept of a 'College PGB'. It also adapted the revised PGB desiderata to the notion of a College PGB (para 5.40).

Achieving Change

The report concluded (Chapter Six) with a discussion aimed at people responsible for achieving change in and around FE colleges, particularly, though not exclusively related to the concept of a PGB. It explored issues relating to the use of consultancy in educational settings (paras 6.3-6.9), identified some of the dynamics of change touched by the concept of a PGB (paras 6.10-6.15), and explored some particular issues relating to the concepts of 'networking' (paras 6.16-6.22) and 'co-ordination' (paras 6.23-6.30).

Appendix: Members of Steering Committee

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Personal Guidance Base

Members of the Steering Committee

John Blythe, FEU

Margaret Levy, MSC

Jack Mansell, FEU (Chairman)

Geoffrey Melling, HMI

John Miller, NICEC

Ruth Silver, Southwark College

Sheila Stoney, NFER

Bryce Taylor, NICEC

A.G. Watts, NICEC

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